A

DISCOVERY

OF SOME

Troubleſome Thoughts.

WHEREWITH

Many Godly precious Souls are burthened, and extreamly preſſed: that like a Canker eats out all their Comforts, and keeps their Souls under continuall fears and Diſtractions.

Together with a Compound of ſome Scripture and experimentall Cordials, for the refreſhing of thoſe who are ſick of ſuch a diſeaſe; and through the bleſſing of God, may prove medicinall, to the Cure of ſome, and the Comforting of others.

By *Daniel King*, Preacher of the Word.

Iſa. 54.11,12,13.

Oh thou afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy ſtones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs. And I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleaſant ſtones. And all thy children ſhall be taught of the LORD, and great ſhall be the peace of thy children.

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To all poor ſouls, who are troubled and toſſed in Spirit; Eſpecially Zions members that are in ſuch a Condition.

PRecious Saints, and faithfull ſouls; The Lord by his providence bringing me to London, and haveing occaſion to continue there a time, I was ſolicited by ſome dear to me, to ſet pen to Paper upon another ſubject, which I was not willing to do at that preſent. But yet I thought it my duty to imploy my ſelf in the ſervice of Chriſt and his people any way as might tend to the Glory of the one, and the benefit of the other. In diverſe parts of the City, and Suburbs thereof, came news to me of ſome whoſe hearts were exceedingly ſhaken with doubts, and ſcruples, and feares, concerning the condition of their Souls; ſome of which are in Communion with the Churches of Chriſt nicknamed Anabaptiſts: ſome hearing among them, confeſſing the truth, and acknowledging the way of worſhip practiſed by them to be of God, deſirous to be one with them; But onely that ſcruples concerning their own condition, wanting the aſſurance of their Juſtification, and reconciliation to God, keeps them off: Whoſe condition divers brethren Queſtion not but to be good, and their ſouls dear to God; onely they could not ſee it themſelves. Juſt like the Diſciples here, Chriſt was at hand, and they thought it was ſome other apparition: And ſo through miſtake were exceedingly troubled. And therefore I ſet upon this piece of Work, being moved thereto, from three or four conſiderable reaſons.

1. Because he that is in affliction ought to take comfort of his neighbour. And what Affliction like Affliction of spirit? And who is my neighbour but he that shewes mercy to me? And truly I cannot but pitty, and tender those who are of the body of Christ, in respect of Union with, and in him; And yet because of Affliction of Spirit, dare not manifest their right to Communion. It is an Argument of a dead member, not to be sensible of the pain of others that suffer. Weep with them that weep, saith the Apostle. And it is some comfort to a sad discouraged soul, when God gives his people a heart to condole their Condition: When they are not forgotten of the Saints.

Job 6.14.
Prov.18.14.
Lam.1.12.

2. Because after I had mentioned my Intention in this thing, to those that moved me to the other task: themselves and others were well satisfied, and desirous that I should hasten in the work as fast as I could; whereupon I perceived I had a Call to it by them.

3. Because I saw I was bound to it as my duty, laid upon me by God himself; according to the Ability given me, to draw it forth this way, as well as otherwise. Seeing God saith, Isa. 40.1.2. Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people, saith your God; Speak to the heart of Jerusalem; tell her, her Iniquity it pardoned, &c. Shewing that Jerusalem questioned her pardon, or was ignorant of it; And that the servants of God, which he had enabled for the work, should declare it to her, and speak to her heart that was troubled, that she might be setled. And saith the Apostle, Comfort the feeble minded. And many other Scriptures to this purpose.

1 Thes 5.14.

4. To be a Testimoniall to Brethren and friends from whom I am absent, that I have not spent my time idly, about vain pleasures, though I have not been with them, but was willing to set forward the work of God in one kind or other, that might be Usefull.

And now to you poor troubled Souls, whose hearts are heavy, and whose souls bleed with sorrows, and are full of fears, who languish under terrors: I know the objections, and scruples of your hearts are numerous, and of various shapes, now appearing in one shape, then in another: Think not that I can speak to

every

every thought or doubt that may trouble you: I have only ſpoken to ſuch as ſeem to me (and that by ſome experience of my own alſo) to be the ground-work or Foundation of moſt of your fears and ſhakings. And (indeed) for the preſent, neither time nor convenient opportunity would give me leave to adde any more. I beſeech you deal plainly with your hearts; Read this Treatiſe, it may be you may light of ſomewhat that may refreſh your ſpirits. Take heed of beleeving Satan, or your own hearts, but beleeve the Lord ſpeaking in the Scripture the Words of God. Do not (dear friends) refuſe to be comforted, when God tenders Comforts to you: The more your hearts are lifted up with ſpirituall Joy, the more cheerfully you will walk with God. Look up to God for a bleſſing when you read; It may be he may open your Underſtandings to underſtand the Scriptures, and the dealings of God with his People, and to know them for your ſelves. Deſpair not, though you have been dead in your hearts (not like Lazarus in body, two dayes, or four dayes, but many dayes) but remember Chriſt will have the glory in raiſing you Up. And I beſeech you, when God hath lifted up your heads (or rather hearts) remember me, who am often (to the grief of my heart) troubled with captivating rebelling fleſh; ſhewing it ſelf preſent when I would and ſhould do good: Intreat that God that is the God of all conſolation, and comforts you, to Quicken me, and carry me through in his work.

Luke 24.

Rom. 7.

2 Cor. 1.

But to thoſe who pretend troubleſome times, becauſe they would ſeem Saints: that like Diſſembling beggars, make themſelves ſores where none are, to maintain their Irregular life: That delight in ſin, and evil courſes, and would have Gods Countenance ſhine upon them, and aſſurance of Salvation be given to them, that they might with the more freedom and boldneſs run on in the way of wickedneſs: would have the Wages, but cannot endure the work: Deſire the end, but care not for the way or means that tends to that end: cry Hoſanna to Chriſt with their mouthes, but crucifie him in heart and life: Chriſt is lovely to them as a Prieſt, to ſave them; but tell them of his Kingdom to be ſet up within them, and without them, in heart and life, and then he ſeems a Tyrant. Let me tell thee, whoſo-

ever thou art, that art of this temper, I have ſaid nothing to thee, nor for thee in this Treatiſe: This comfortable Cordiall that I have endeavoured to compound for the comfort of Souls really ſick, ſhall become thy poyſon, if thou offer to meddle with it. Taſte not one ſip of it I charge thee; and if thou doſt, I am guiltleſs of thy blood, having given thee a fair warning. I have written it for the uſe of thoſe whoſe hearts God hath touched, and are ſick of love for him who is altogether Lovely: Not for ſuch as turn the grace of God into wantonneſs. So I commit it to the bleſſing of God, and the approbation of the Churches of Chriſt; † and ſuch in them, as are moſt experienced in the dealings of God with troubled ſouls; And deſire to continue, as by the grace of God I am,

† As namely the Churches of Chriſt in London meeting uſually at the glaſſe-houſe in Broad ſtreet, The Church in Coventry, The Church in Warwick, The Church at Hook-Norton in Oxfordſhire; And the Church meeting neer Martin-Hinmarſh in Glouceſterſhire, or any others to whom I am neer related.

From the Lime-kiln at Pickle-Hering in Southwark this 7th. of the 11th. Moneth.

A ſervant to Chriſt, and the meaneſt of his Saints,

DANIEL KING.

A Diſcovery of ſome troubleſome thoughts, wherewith many Godly Precious Souls are burthened and extreamly preſſed.

Together with a Compound of Scripture and experimentall Cordials, for the refreſhing of thoſe who are ſick of ſuch a Diſeaſe, &c.

Luke 24. 38.

And he ſaid unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts ariſe in your hearts?

THe words contain a reproof or reprehenſion of the Diſciples of Chriſt, by Chriſt himſelf; laid down by way of Interrogation: Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts ariſe in your hearts? Like that of Mar. 4. 40. *Why are ye ſo fearfull?* and Matth. 21. 25. *Why then do you not beleeve on him?* and according to that, Iſa. 40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou O Jacob, and ſpeakeſt O Iſrael, my way is hid from the Lord; and my Judgement is paſſed over from my God?*

The

The words consist of two parts.

Division. 1. The thing for which Christ reproveth them, though in a loving sweet manner I confess for being so troubled.

2. The ground of this their trouble, Thoughts arising in their hearts.

And it appears it was a reproof of them, because he laboureth to take them off from this distemper, in the next words, Behold my hands, and my feet, that it is I my self: for they were troubled through a mistake, thinking they had seen a spirit, and not Christ: And therefore he did not approve of it, but reproveth it.

Consider further,

1. Who it was that speaketh here; Christ himself.

2. To whom he spake; To his Disciples, beleevers.

3. At what time; And that was when he himself came in among them, and was present with them, and saluted them with peace. Vers. 36.

For the meaning of the words, I will be brief.

Meaning of the words. 1. Troubled. *Trouble.* This word is set out to us diversly in Scripture.

1. Sometimes it signifieth povertie. 1 Chron. 22.14. *In my trouble* (or povertie) saith David, *I have prepared for the house of the Lord.* This is spoken Metonymically, the cause for the effect.

2. It signifieth to be shortened. Job 21.4. *Why should not my Spirit be troubled?* The Hebrew reading is, *shortened*, When a man is straightened, and cannot be so enlarged as he would be: Its a phrase taken from one that is overburthened, and is so pressed down that he cannot look up, nor go forward, but falleth short of what he would reach or attain to; And so is filled with perplexities and fears.

3. It importeth weariness, or to be tired under a burthen. Nehem. 9.32. *O our God, let not all the trouble seem little before thee*; the Hebrew reading is, *Weariness.* It meaneth so to be burthened as not to be able to stand up under it; Ps. 38. 6. *I am troubled* (Hebr. *Wryed*) *I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day.* So that it is to be writhen or wryed aside, and bowed down under some Burden, into a mourning condition.

condition. The word is ſometimes joyned with anguiſh, ſhewing the vexation of the heart. Job 15. 24. *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid*; ſometimes with ſorrow. Pſal. 116. 3. *I found trouble and ſorrow.* Now all theſe are ingredients into theſe thoughts; and it is as if Chriſt ſhould have ſaid, why are ye ſo poor that ye have no confidence, nor no Joy in your hearts? Why are ſo diſtempered, and wearied, and burthened in your ſelves? Why are ye ſo ſtraightened, and ſo full of anguiſh and ſorrow, that ye cannot ſtretch out your hearts to believe, and quiet your ſouls in God through Chriſt?

Again, conſider where the ſeat of this trouble was; in the heart, or ſpirit; It was not upon the Body, nor ſtate, nor name; but upon the Soul.

Conſider again, whence this trouble aroſe; from thoughts. Some Tranſlations read it *doubtings*; It ſignifieth diſtracting thoughts, turbulent thoughts, or debatings and Reaſonings, whereby the heart is diſcouraged, and begins to ſink under its burthen; and is tired with muſings, and toſſings up and down, through fear and doubt: like that Mat. 6. 25. *Take no thought for your life*; that is, diſtruſtfull thought, to be of doubtfull mind, or to hang in carefull ſuſpence; * Such thoughts Chriſt endeavoureth to Arm them againſt. Mar. 13. 11. And ſuch thoughts *David* ſpeaketh of, Pſal. 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my Soul*; Thoughts ariſing from a mixture of unbelief; ſo this place ſheweth; they believed not that it was Chriſt, and thereupon thoughts aroſe. Contrary to that Matt. 21. 21. *If you have faith, and doubt not*; But theſe were like *Peters* thoughts about the viſion, *Act.* 10. 17. When he knew not what to pitch upon, nor how to have his heart ſatisfied; But ſticks in doubts, and fears, and ſcruples, and cannot get out. And ſuch kind of thoughts trouble the heart exceedingly. Dan. 5. 6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him*; ſo verſe 10. *O King, let not thy thoughts trouble thee.* So *Mary*, *Luke* 1. 29. It is ſaid, She was troubled at the Angels ſaying, and caſt in her mind what

*Luke

manner of salutation this should be. It stuck in her mind, and troubled her for the present.

Arise in your hearts.

It is a metaphor taken from the rising of clouds, or mists, whereby the shining face of the Sun is obscured from the Earth: So by the rising of these thoughts, and doubts, the sweet presence of Christ, that was among them, now was obscured, and not so pleasant to them.

Sometimes me thinks, The Interrogation carrieth the face of an Admiration; *Why are YE troubled? YE, And why do thoughts arise in YOUR hearts? What you my Disciples, that are beleevers!* John 14. 1. *Ye beleeve in God*; You that have been so intimate with Christ, that have had so much experience of Christ! did not I tell you that after three dayes I should rise again? have not you formerly had sweet Communion with me? strange! *Why are ye troubled?* But I take it to be a gentle reproof.

Again consider, whence those thoughts arose; from themselvs, not from Christ; from a principle of their own hearts, for it was in their hearts that they rose, and from their hearts: Christ said, peace be unto you; but they arose from their own suppositions, and mistakes, as appeareth from vers. 7. *They were terrified, and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit.*

The words shew also the certainty of these beleevers or Disciples trouble of mind, by the Ingemination of the Question; *Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?* he doth not say are ye troubled? and do thoughts arise? but why is it so? Implying a certainty.

I hope the words are cleared up; I come now to the observations.

Doctrinall observations.

And first from the Interrogation

Why are ye troubled? &c. Whence observe a truth implicitely infolded in the words; that is this,

That the Saints of God, the Disciples of Christ, even in Gospel times, are subject to trouble of mind, & distemper of spirit.

2. *Why are ye troubled, and why? &c.* Christ asketh them the reason of it, shewing it was not from him.

Whence

Whence obſerve again,

That it is not from Chriſt, but principally from a beleever himſelf, and his own heart, that he is ſo much troubled as he is.

3. From the ground of their trouble, Thoughts, or doubtings that aroſe in their hearts, I obſerve again, 3.

There is corruption enough in the heart of every beleever (if it did but ſhew it ſelf) to trouble him, and mightily diſtemper him. Rom. 7. *Paul telleth us ſin dwelled in him, and when he would do good evil was preſent, and the Law in his members rebelled againſt the Law of his mind*; and now ſee how it troubled him, verſ. 24. *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Many wonder that beleevers ſhould be troubled in Goſpel times; Why ſo? Are beleevers free from the ſtirring and moving of corruption? and ſo long as unbelief oppoſeth faith, and the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, is it any wonder to ſee them troubled?

4. From the Ingemination, or doubling of the Queſtion, Why, and why? 4.

I note,

That it behoveth a Chriſtian in trouble of ſpirit, to obſerve the ground whence it riſeth.

5. Why are ye troubled? Why ſee *verſ.* 37. It was a miſtake; for they had cauſe to have rejoyced; becauſe they were not acquainted with the manner of Chriſts appearance at that time, they utterly miſtake and make contrary conſtructions of his appearance. 5.

Whence I note,

That many times, the Saints and people of God, are mightily troubled, and perplexed in their hearts, and ſpirits, when they have cauſe to rejoyce, and be comforted.

6. From the generall; That Chriſt reproveth them for it, and laboureth to help them againſt it, as appears ver. 38. 39. 40. *And he ſaid unto them, why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts ariſe in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf: handle me and ſee me; for a Spirit hath not fleſh and* 6. Doctrin.

bones, as ye ſee me to have. And when he had thus ſpoken, *he ſhewed them his hands, and his feet.*

I obſerve again,

That Chriſt would not have his people tire themſelves, and burden themſelves with lying under diſcouraging thoughts, to trouble and affright their own hearts with doubtings and diſcouragements. Or thus.

Chriſt would not have his people lie under diſcouragement of heart. He reproves it here, and helps them againſt it. John 14.1. Saith Chriſt to his Diſciples, *Let not your heart be troubled*; there was cauſe enough a man would think. Chriſt telleth them he muſt ſuffer, and they ſhould all be ſcattered from him, and *Peter* ſhould deny him that night; It was like to be a ſad time; yet ſaith he, *Let not your heart be troubled: neither let it be affraid*, verſ. 27. So Mar. 13.7. *Be ye not troubled*, when you ſhall hear of this and this. So alſo the Scripture is clear Iſa. 56.3. *Neither let the Son of the ſtranger, that hath joyned himſelf to the Lord, ſpeak, ſaying, the Lord hath utterly ſeparated me from his people: neither let the eunuch ſay, Behold, I am a dry tree.* Let them not ſay ſo, ſaith God; as if he ſhould ſay; Let them not ſay ſo, ſaith God, as if I had caſt them off, or had no mercy for them. So in the 42. and 43. Pſalmes, *Why art thou caſt down, Oh my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* See how the Spirit of God guideth him to debate the buſineſs, why there was ſuch a hurry in his heart. Chriſt would not have his people do ſo. Hebr. 12.5. He would not have them forget that exhortation that ſpeaketh unto them as to children, *My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the correction of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.*

I ſhall a little follow and clear up this point, for the incouragement of drouping ſouls, whoſe hearts languiſh under terrours.

Reaſons. That he would not have them diſcouraged.

And I ſhall ſhew reaſons for the confirmation of it, and they are of two ſorts;

1. Reaſons to ſhew that he would not have them diſcouraged.

2. Why

2. Why he would not.

Firſt, That he would not;

1. It appeareth from the frequency of the promiſe; you can hard ly read any part of the word, but you light thick and threefold upon the promiſes. Now if God would have had his people to lie languiſhing under ſorrows, and perplexing themſelves with thoughts, ſinking under diſcouragements, he would never have left ſuch ſtore of promiſes upon record for them as he hath done. Conſider what a promiſe there is *John* 14. 18. *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come to you.* Methinks this ſhould bear up the heart; God will not leave you Orphans (for ſo the word is) in a deſtitute, ſad, helpleſs condition, as uſually Orphans are; and *Iſa.* 51. 12. *I, even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a mun that ſhall die?* &c. Mark, *I am he, and who art thou?* As if he ſhould ſay who art thou, that thy heart ſhould ſink under ſuch promiſes? when (not another but) I am he that is thy comforter. I beſeech you poor ſouls, do but conſider how God doth inculcate, and urge his promiſes to his people to chear them up, *Iſa.* 41. 9, 10. *Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and ſaid unto thee, thou art my ſervant, I have choſen thee, and not caſt thee away*; here is ſweet incouragements. But mark now, *Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not diſmaid, for I am thy God*; *I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* O but may ſome ſay, I am a poor worm, have nothing that is lovely, nor deſireable in me, an unworthy wretch. Why ſee *verſ.* 14. *Fear not thou worm* Jacob, *and yee men of Iſrael, I will help thee ſaith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael.* And ſaith *Peter.* 2. *Pet.* 1. 4. There is given to us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe you ſhould be partakers of the Divine Nature. Now the Divine Nature is not ſubject to theſe vexations and troubles; Therefore from the frequency of the promiſes, and the end of them, we may well conclude God would not have his people lie under diſcouragments.

2. Becauſe he hath given them of his Spirit, to cry *Abba* Father. Now if he give them the ſpirit of adoption, it argues clearly he would not have them diſcouraged, *Joh.14.16. I will pray the father* (ſaith Chriſt) *and he ſhall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the ſpirit*, &c. Rom. 8. 16. *The ſpirit witneſſeth with our ſpirits, that we are the ſons of God.* Now if he give his ſpirit to this end to comfort the Saints, and witneſs their adoption, then it muſt needs follow he would not have them diſcouraged.

3. Becauſe he cals for, and requires that the miniſtry of conſolation be performed, *Iſa.* 40. 1. 2. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem: tell her, her iniquity is pardoned, and her warfare is accompliſhed.* See what a ſtrict charge here is to comfort the people of God. Yea, and God challengeth the falſe prophets for not performing this miniſtery; but acting contrary to it; Ezek. 13. 22. *Becauſe with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous ſad, whom I not made ſad; therefore ye ſhall ſee no more vanity, nor divine divination, &c.* And *Cap.* 34 16, 17. 18. When the prophets neglected tending and tendring the ſheep, ſee what the Lord ſaith; I will ſeek that which was loſt, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will ſtrengthen that which was ſick; but I will deſtroy the fat and the ſtrong; and I will feed them with judgement. Now then if God take ſuch care that they may be comforted, and undertake for them, then he would not have them diſcouraged.

4. Becauſe God the Father hath givtn Commiſſion to Chriſt, to take ſpecial care of them, that they be not overborn: And Chriſt hath undertaken it. *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoaking flax will he not quench, he will bring forth judgement into victory.* This is the glory of Chriſts Kingdom, that he ſhall ſupport the weak; and this Chriſt gives in charge to Peter, if he love him, to feed his Lambs. And the Apoſtle gives ſpeciall charge to the Churches, to comfort one another; 1 Theſſ. 4. 18. *Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words.* And 5. 14. I beſeech you brethren, ſupport

Iſa. 42 3.

John 21.

ſupport the weak, comfort the feeble-minded; Therefore he would not have them lie under diſcouragements.

The 2. ſort of Reaſons are why he would not, &c. 2

Reaſons why God would not have his people troubled. 1. Becauſe he is very pitifull, and tender: A good body would have no body hurt, no not ſo much as a prick with a pin, nor a fillip with the finger: a quiet meek ſpirit is ſo tender. So is God of his people, Jam. 5. 11. *The Lord is very pitifull*: conſider the end the Lord maketh, that he is very pitifull: he delighteth in mercy; *Mic.* 7. And not in oppreſſing thy ſoul. Lam. 3. 33. *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* He took it ill, that his people ſhould father and faſten their diſcouragements upon him; Iſa. 40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou, O Jacob, and ſpeakeſt, O Iſrael, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is paſſed over from my God?* Why doſt ſay ſo *Iſrael?* there is no cauſe at all; he is ſo far from ſlighting thee, that he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaſeth ſtrength: therefore he would not have them ſink into Anxiety and ſadneſs.

2. It appears to be ſo, From the excellency of holy rejoycing, and the acceptableneſs of it to God; God delighteth more in this then in all ſervices whatſoever; for all other works of the ſpirit flow into this; And therefore he that was to bring his ſacrifice, *Deut.* 26. 34. among other things which he profeſſed, this was one, *I have not eaten thereof in my mourning*; *Mal.* 2. 12. 13. 14. And this have ye done again, covering the Altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, inſomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, nor receiveth it with good will at your hands, Pſal. 100. 2. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs, come before his preſence with ſinging*; and Pſal. 2. 10. *Rejoyce with trembling*, Phil. 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I ſay rejoyce.* Rejoyce evermore, &c. Now if God be ſo well pleaſed with holy rejoycing, then he would not have his people lie under ſorrows, wounding their hearts and breaking of them to pieces under terrors. 2.

3. Becauſe diſcouragements drive from God, and are contrary to Communion which God delights in; therefore 3.

Chriſt

Christ knocketh at the door, and calleth for opening; *Rev.* 3. *Cant.* 5. 2. *Psal.* 14. 8. 9. and saith he would sup with the Soul; John 14. And his father and he would make their abode there. A man will never go to his judge, and executioner, one that will cut his throat, till he be perswaded of favour. Terrours drive *Cain* into the land of *Nod*, from the presence of God. Therefore saith the Lord, I drew them with the cords of Love. In Gods presence is fulnes of Joy: therefore the more oppressing sorrow, the further from Gods presence. Discouragement made *Peter* cry out, *Luke* 5. 3. 9. 10. *Lord depart from me, for I am a sinfull man*: for he was astonished, and afraid, as appears by Christs incouraging of him.

4. Because this deadens the actings of all the works of the spirit in the heart; God hath not the glory of his spirit in this way: a sad sullen discouraged spirit deadens all; 2 Cor. 7. 10. *The sorrow of the world worketh death.* It killeth the spirit, not the body, but dearh of duty; it makes a man he cannot come off with any dexterity of duty, death of care, clearing of your selves, indignation, fear, vehement desire, zeal, revenge: it deadens these. Nay it makes a man utterly unfit for some services of God, as spirituall rejoycing: This causeth crying, not singing: and rejoycing and singing is a piece of Gods service. Isa. 65. 14. *My servants shall sing for joy of heart.* Sorrow made *Hemah* unfit for the service of God. 1 *Sam.* 1. 7. And *Solomon* saith Prov. 12. 25. *Heavines in the heart of man makes it stoop, but a good word makes it glad.* The heart is down when it is heavy, and not so fit for spirituall services.

5. Because by this discouraged troubled frame of spirit, thou art made unfit for Gods consolations; to receive them, or rejoyce in him, it is distastefull to thee; *As he that taketh away a garment in cold woather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart. Prov.* 25. 20. It will not be born. Therefore mark, when God sends *Moses* with a message of mercy to *Israel*, and he delivered it according to Gods Command, yet they harkned not to him; what was the matter? Why, for anguish of spirit, and sore bondage

bondage. That unfitted them for the beleeving the meſſage of God, and receiving mercy. And the Pſalmiſt in his overwhelmings of ſpirit, *Pſal.* 77. ſaith, *My ſoul refuſed to be comforted.*

6. Becauſe Chriſt took their troubles upon him, and bare them, *Therefore was his ſoul troubled,* John. 12. 27. and 13. 21. *Surely he took our infirmities, and carryed our ſorrows,* ſaith the Prophet *Iſa.* 53. *Therefore he would have us to rejoyce; yea, he would have his joy remain in his Diſciples,* John, 15. 11. Now then, if God be ſo tender and pittiful; If holy rejoycing be ſo acceptable to him; If trouble of ſpirit drives from God (I mean diſcouragement) and be contrary to communion; If it deadens the actings of the works of the ſpirit; If it makes the ſoul unfit for Gods conſolations; If Chriſt have born our ſorrows of purpoſe to eaſe us; Then it muſt needs follow that Chriſt would not have his people diſcouraged: But all theſe are true; Therefore the other. 6.

But ſome may ſay; The Apoſtle, James. 4. 9. Biddeth *Be afflicted, mourn and weep:* And Chriſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are ye that mourn:* Therefore this cannot be ſo. Objection.

I anſwer, that in *James,* is his councel to thoſe that had adulterated themſelves with the world, as appears by the former part of the Chapter; and this mourning is nothing but repentance, Godly ſorrow, which *Paul* was glad was in the Corinthians. But the ſorrow we ſpeak of, is doubting diſcouraging ſorrow: of which *James* ſpeaks not. And that of Chriſt is a mourning in regard of afflictions and perſecutions of the Goſpel which they were to ſuffer for Chriſts ſake, or Godly ſorrow: and therefore declares them bleſſed: Not to mourn with a diſtruſtful diſtracting mourning. So that it makes nothing againſt the point, that Chriſt would not have his people lie under diſcouragements.

But ſome may ſay again, This is a needleſs poynt: for the people of God in Goſpel times are not troubled in their hearts. Object. 2.

I Anſwer, Yea but they be: which appears by theſe conſiderations.

1. Becauſe

1. Becauſe ſometimes they want that meaſure of comfort, and joy, that they ſhould have, and might have. Col. 2. 2. *That their hearts might be comforted.* This was the end of *Pauls* conflict. and Iohn. 16. 24. *Aske, and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* This ſhews that their hearrs wanted comfort, and their joy was not full. Therefore their hearts are troubled in Goſpel times.

2. Becauſe the Apoſtle took order rhat the people of God and Saints might be comforted: Sometimes by ſending men of purpoſe to them to comfort them: which need not have been, in caſe they had not wanted comfort. *Epheſ.* 6. 22. *Paul* declareth that he ſent *Tychicus* of purpoſe to them, among other things, *To comfort their hearts.* And the ſame man counſelleth the Corinthians, 2 *Corin.* 13. 11. to be of good comfort. And he ſent *Tychicus* to the *Colloſſians*, to comfort their hearts. *Col.* 4. 8. And he ſent *Timothy* to the Theſſalonians to comfort them concerning their faith. 1 *Theſ.* 3. 2. And exhorteth them, Chap. 4. 18. *to comfort one another*, and. 5. 14. comfort the feeble minded. Somtimes by praying that they might be comforted. 1 *Theſ.* 2. 17. Now our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and God even our Father—— comfort your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good word and work. This labor and prayers might have been ſpared, if ſaints wanted no comfort in Goſpel times. Now I come to Application.

Uſes of the point.

1. Of Information.

Is it ſo, That Chriſt would not have his people lie under diſcouragements? Then it informs us, that we may boldly ſay and conclude, that God is willing Chriſtians ſhould abound with the conſolations of God: It is the will of God you ſhould have peace, look up, rejoyce, and have conſolation: what! the Saints make a queſtion whether it be not Gods will they ſhould lie under ſorrow, and when terrors upon themſelves, and not take comfort of the good word of God, when it is Gods minde they ſhould beleive, and be cheerful, and rejoyce in God, and not lie dejected, but look up with Spiritual triumph in the Lord. But we cannot be perſwaded of this leſſon: and hence we think we can never afflict our ſelves enough, and rake into our hearts, and

ſtudy

ſtudy how to keep our ſelves from the conſolations of God. Take heed of this: for this doth not pleaſe God, that men ſhould thus diſcourage themſelves, and be turned out of their right ſpiritual joy. Lam. 3. 31. *The Lord will not caſt off for ever. But though he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor greive the children of men. To cruſh under his feet all the priſoners of the earth, To turn aſide the right of a man before the face of the moſt high, To ſubvert a man in his cauſe, the Lord approveth not.* verſ. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. All this is brought to this very ſcope, to ſhew it doth not delight the Lord thou ſhouldſt be oppreſſed, and afflicted: but rather rejoyce, and take comfort: the Lord approves not of thy ſubverting thy ſelf in thy cauſe, no more then of another ſubverting thee.

It is againſt God that we ſhould afflict our ſelves.

Let me tell thee, It is utterly againſt God, that we ſhould afflict our ſelves, and languiſh under terrors, and affright our ſelves with the apprehenſions of wrath: All the reaſons make it clear, that God would have his people ioyful and chearful. Nehemiah. 8. 10. *The joy of the Lord is our ſtrength.* So that this is againſt God in divers reſpects.

1.

1. It is againſt the nature of God, which is filled up with Ingredients of goodneſs: it is eight to one. Exod. 34. 6. 7. *I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee, ſaith the Lord;* And he proclaimed, *The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull, and gratious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth: keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, trangreſſion and ſin, and that will by no meanes clear the guilty,* &c. So that this argues, that Gods nature in his diſpenſation towards us, *is mildneſs, goodneſs, ſweetneſs. However equal in himſelf, yet towards us he hath magnified his word above all his Name.* Pſal. 138. 2. Now his word declareth his attributes, eſpecially his attributes of grace.

2

2. It is againſt his offices; look into the order of the three perſons, and they all flow into this, let poor ſouls be comforted: Here is the Father the fountain ſet open; The ſons merit, that poor ſouls debt be

paid: The Spirits diſtribution for the ſupplying, comforting of poor ſouls: All their offices are exerciſed for the effecting and carrying on of grace.

3. It is againſt Gods Covenant. For God undertakes our
3. part of the Covenant for us where we are ſhort. Iſa. 48. 17. *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, and leadeth thee in the way that thou ſhalt go.* Jerem. 32. 40. *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* Hebr. 8. *I will write my law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts: And I WILL be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people: And they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt: for I WILL be merciful to your tranſgreſſions, and your ſins and iniquities I will remember no more.*

4. It is againſt Gods glory: take things rightly: He
4. hath pronounced the glory of his juſtice againſt the unbelieving world already. John. 3. 18. *He that beleeveth not is condemned already.* And hath reſerved the glory of his grace for his elect people; he cannot have the glory of his grace from Reprobates: It is the glory of his grace to ſave poor humbled ſinners: I came not to call the righteous but ſinners to Repentance. For righteous men, grace cannot act upon them: It is no grace to give a righteous man his wages. Again, to take a rebellious Sinner into grace, and let him remain rebellious, is not grace: for Gods countenance cannot look upon iniquity to approve of it. But grace is to ſhew mercy to ſinners; That is, poor, humble, repenting, beleiving ſinners, ſuch as ſtoop for mercy; Now here it is grace; So that God muſt either glorifie his grace in poor humbled ſinners, or have no glory of his grace. Therefore it is againſt God.

Hab. 1.

5. It is againſt the work of God, his work of creation in
5. thee, and for thee. Iſa. 65. *But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold I create Jeruſalem a rejoycing, and her people a joy.* Man; God never gave thee a new heart, that thou ſhouldeſt alwaies let it lie bleeding with diſtracting thoughts

thoughts and discouragements, but to rejoyce. I create *Jerusalem* a rejoycing, and her people a joy.

The 2. Use is of Reproof.

And it is of those that discourage themselves, by harbouring and entertaining discouraging heart-breaking thoughts, as Christ disciples here; why do thoughts arise in your hearts? And herein I shall endeavour to propound cases that are troubles and discouragements to the hearts of many; And to answer to them, both by way of reproof, and discovery of the mistakes which are the ground of such troubles, and also to lay down some grounds of incouragement for troubled souls; So that this use will be both of reproof, of instruction, and incouragement. 2. Use of reproof of those that discourage themselves.

And herein I shall mention some of those thoughts that do distract and distemper the people of God; for it is impossible to speak to them all particularly, they are so various, according to the various manner of Sathans working, and laying his snares and engines to intangle poor souls; This tree of discouraging complaints, hath multitudes of branches and appearances, which would be an endles work to go about to cut and prune them off one by one; Therefore I shall speak to the root of them, and endeavour to cut of those spurs that spreading into, and fastning upon a poor soul, feed all the branches of this bitter tree, that makes the soul cry out there is death in the pot.

The first discouraging thought that troubleth a godly soul. The first discouraging thought.

Oh (saith the soul) I am none of Christs, none of Gods, I have no interest in him; am not in covenant with him; cannot call him mine as others can do; I cannot find the witness in me, testifying to my heart as others have done; God seals not to my spirit as he hath done to others; I pray for it, and long for it, but cannot come by it; Therefore how can my heart choose but be troubled, and thoughts arise in it?

To this case let me speak a word or two; Who told thee that thou wast none of Gods? did God ever say so in his word, or did the spirit of God ever witness such a thing to

thee? No, thou canst not say so; The Spirit of God witnesseth Adoption, and not destruction. And if Satan, or thy own heart tell thee so, they are both deceitfull.

And therefore,

A necessary observation. First know, that to know ye are Gods children, or interested in him, is not the first round in the Ladder of Christianity: The Prodigals course was not first to know whether his father would receive him, and entertain him as a Son, or a servant; but he resolves to go, and confess his sin and unworthiness, and cast himself upon his fathers mercy. The Apostles in planting Churches, first preached faith in Christ simply: But to beleevers, they prest them on to further assurance. 2 *Pet.* 1. *vers.* 10. *Strive to make your calling and election sure.* Therefore this do. If you know not your selves to be Gods, go and present your selves as objects of the grace of Christ: For all the promises are in Christ, as spokes fitted in the wheel; Therefore saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. 32. If God have given us Christ, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? I say, present your selves before God as objects to be wrought upon; that God would make you sensible of sin, and give you a longing desire after Christ. For God hath his spirit of bondage to rough-hew you, as well as his Spirit of Adoption to polliſh you. Now when God hath thus fitted thee, go offer thy self to Christ, and the promise, with Assurance: But what assurance? Not of thy person, as if thou wert already Gods; for it may be thou hast not yet the Seal; but assurance of the promise made to thy condition. Mat. 5. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness; for they shall be filled.* So that if thou canst not present thy self before God as a Son, present thy self before the promise of God as a lost man: And so presenting thy self before God, with relation to the truth and sweetness of the Promise, it may be, thou shalt find Faith flow out of thy heart to imbrace the promise: for when the heart is emptied, it is best fitted to receive free grace: for first

A direction, 2 Cor. 1.

Rom. 8.

first God gives the Faith of the promise, and then the good of the promise must be received by the faith of the promise; I mean, it redounds to a man by vertue of that.

To the point then.

You say you are none of Gods.

I answ. The best state is for a man or Woman to be Gods, and know it. To be Gods and know it.

2. The best next is to be Gods though he do not know it.

1. I say, The best state or Condition is for a man to be Gods, and know it that he is so: Though not to know it doth not cut up the mil-post, and overthrow all; though it may indeed take off the sailes: I mean, though it may put a man to a stand, or make him go heavily; yet it doth not prove his condition to be desperate.

A man is Gods two wayes: By Election, and Calling. A man is Gods two wayes.

1. By Election. So a man may be a sheep not gathered; *John* 10.16. *Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them MUST I bring.* So that they are not yet brought, and yet sheep, which Christ must bring. Therefore ye cannot make this conclusion, that ye are none of Gods by Election. 1 By Election.

But, Secondly A man is Gods by Calling; And so he is a Saint: for we are Saints by Calling. Now the purpose of Gods electing, is the calling of a man, and the Evidencing of his Calling. And therefore our Calling is effectuall and powerfull, because it is a calling accotding to Gods purpose, *Rom.*8 28. And the purpose of God in Election, is evidenced to us by Calling; the first dawning and evidence of this love of God to us, is this calling us to Christ. 2 *Pet.*1.10. *Give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* So that the way of Evidence is from the second to the first. Now it is best for a man to know himself Gods both wayes: For though this assurance doth nor make a man to be a man in Christ; yet it makes him to be a lively man in Christ; for he is made a man in Christ simply by beleeving, or taking Christ at the hands of God. 2 By Calling. 1.Cor.1,1.

Now we are evidenced to be Gods both wayes; by a double A double witnes.

double witness; that gives evidence: The evidence of our Spirit, and the evidence of Gods Spirit. Rom. 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Sons of God.* Now this Calling is evidenced two wayes.

Regeneration. 1. By regeneration, or being born of God. Secondly by Adoption; whereby being strangers, we are made Sons, by our incorporation into Christ. For both these see *John* 1. 12. 13. *As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God: even to those that beleeve on his name.* Sons of God, who are those? Those that are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Now observe, that the Sons of God by faith in Christ, are Sons of God by the birth of the Spirit. Therefore see whether your faith reach this, or no: They were born not of blood, nor by the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. For prove one, and prove the other.

Adoption. Yet know, that Regeneration and Adoption are two distinct things: The one is the act of God towards us; The other is the work of the Spirit in us. But the Spirit of sanctification, and the Spirit of Adoption, are both one, but they are two distinct acts: The Spirit of Sanctification worketh in us a new life; The Spirit of Adoption may rather be called the evidence. So that prove one, and prove the other. Prove that a man breathes, and by that you prove he liveth; yet there may be a more proper proof, as if he feel or see, &c. So that this is it that I would say, That the witness of our spirit may properly be said to attest our Sanctification, And the witness of Gods Spirit our Adoption: And by both, our spirit and Gods Spirit, we are witnessed to be the Sons of God.

How our Spirits witness our new birth. But observe, that the witness of our spirits that witnesseth our new birth, and Sanctification, witnesseth it by Water and Blood, 1. *John* 5. 6. 8. *This is he that came by water and Blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water onely, but by water and Blood; And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the spirit is truth. And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and water, and blood, and these three agree in one.* And

it

it is by vertue of theſe two, that our ſpirits do atteſt and witneſs that we are the Sons of God. For blood, and water, all the Scripture over are ſaid to purge and cleanſe, as in all the Legal Types: yet God giveth to them an office of witneſſing. Properly they purge; But they Witneſs by their work of purging: This BLOOD, the blood of Chriſt, purgeth away the guilt of Sin, as it bindeth a man over to hell and damnation; This Water, the Sanctifying Spirit of Chriſt, purgeth away the love of Sin as it hath Dominion. † Of both theſe the conſcience of a regenerate man comes to be ſenſible in himſelf: The ſenſe of Blood purging by pacifying of his conſcience, that he cannot but look upon God with a conſcience full of tranquility: And the water purging by Sanctifyng him, to make him walk with God, out of the power of ſin. Now the witneſs of a mans ſpirit witneſſeth that he is tranſlated out of the guilt of ſin, and power of ſin, and then he is born again.

† Ezek. 36. 25. 26. 27.

But ſome may object and ſay, This teſtimony may deceive. Objection.

I anſwer, If you conſider the power of this blood and water in a man; How wonderfully it removes a man from all inthralling luſts, and how it compels him to walk in holineſs: yea, the peace that riſeth from blood-purging Sin, which moves morally to holy walking, and is full of infinite ſtrength for the ſence of the pardon of ſin; And that is an excellent adjunct unto, and in Sanctification as can be: the graces of Sanctification do determine the Soul to the wayes of God; as a ſtrong Byas ſheweth which way the Bowl will go. Conſider that for one, how the heart is moved in Gods way, And that is by Faith and Love. Anſwer.

And then if you conſider the reſpect, or aim, or end the new creature moves to; That is, In God, for God, and to God, that he may be glorified. *Rom.* 11. *ult.* For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; All things that are of him, through him, tend to him. Conſider all theſe together, that they be in you, the power of Moving, how you are moved, By Faith and Love: And the end you aim at, to

glorifie God: And it makes a good Teſtimony and witneſs, that ye are the Sons of God.

The witneſs of Gods Spirit.

Now for the Teſtimony of Gods Spirit, the Spirit of Adoption, If we ſhall ſpeak diſtinctly of it from our ſpirits; for the ſpirit, and water, and blood are diſtinct, though they agree in one. 1 *John* 5. 8. Now if you conſider them diſtinct, I conceive then, the Spirit of God witneſſeth by an immediate impreſſion upon the Soul, repreſenting to the ſoul and conſcience, making you underſtand and know that you are the Sons of God, and heirs of God and Chriſt: Which Spirit of teſtimony is gotten by faith in Chriſt, by viewing, eying, and ſurveying Chriſt. For becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby you cry *Abba*, Father. *Gal.* 4. 6. Whoſe office is to atteſt ye are Chriſts. So that here the office of faith is to look upon Chriſt, and eye Chriſt; that ſo we may receive the ſeal: For a man muſt be a beleever, elſe he cannot be a ſon; but being a beleever and ſo a Son, then comes the Spirit and witneſſeth the ſame.

Object. But this witneſs you ſpeak of now, this immeditate teſtimony may deceive alſo; It may be ſome falſe fire caſt in by the Devil, as well as the other.

Anſw. The witneſs of the Spirit of God, as it is the Spirit of God, will alwayes clear it ſelf by this; That in the witneſs it gives to a ſoul, it alwayes advanceth God and Chriſt in the eye of the Soul; and it alway ripens and nouriſheth ſanctifying graces in the ſoul, and makes them go glib, like oyl to the wheels: It makes our Faith, Love, Patience, Humility, Hope, Self-denyall, Joy, &c. whereby we walk with God, as green and flouriſhing, as flowers in the ſpring, or as corn fields after a ſweet ſhower.

Note.

Baſtard-illuſions of the Devil do alwayes tend to baſtard-ends, and do alwayes bring forth baſtard-effects: ſuch as lift up a man with pride, or bouſter them up to maintain errour either in Life or Doctrine. But this knowledge of a mans ſelf to be Gods, reacheth forth to God, and acteth his ſpirituall habits ſweetly, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. We know (ſaith *Paul*) *that if*

this

this earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands eternall in the heavens, We know it, ſaith he; And what effect had this upon their Spirits? Why ſee, verſ. 9. *Wherefore we labour that whether preſent or abſent, We may be accepted of him.* This is far from that opinion, that a mans knowing himſelf to be Gods, worketh ſecurity; no, this makes a mans heart obey God as a Son. And be ſure the Devill in his counterfeit workings and witneſſings, will never draw the ſoul to God, to aim at him, but ſtill to center in himſelf, or to turn aſide to errour or ſin. And this is to fight againſt himſelf, and overthrow his own Kingdom, which he will never do.

But now take heed of thinking your ſelves to be Gods when you are not; for there is the danger, to conceit your ſelves to be Gods when you are not. A caveat.

Now ye may go long in this by reaſon of ſome counterfeit workings; by reaſon of ſome Convictions, or joy, or common receiving of Chriſt, ye may take your ſelves to be Gods when you are not. But here you may bewray your ſelves if you will but ſearch.

For 1. you may perform duties meerly to maintain your ſigns: for a man may keep a courſe in a form of godlineſs to maintain his reputation with himſelf, to maintain his ſigns; that the heart ſhall not eaſily tax them to be rotten, When a man hath not his end to enjoy, & walk with God, & ſo to be Gods.

2. He may bewray himſelf by his deſires after the fruits of the Spirit; they may be earneſt, and if theſe deſires were not in him he could not maintain his ſigns. To deſire graces as they are beneficiall to me, and not for the ſervice of them, that I may come neer to God, and ſeek them for him, rather then for my ſelf, this is deceitfull. I fear the reaſon why God gives not aſſurance to many a man that ſeeks long, and earneſtly, is, becauſe a man ſeeks for himſelf, and not for God; Like the Bee, that goeth into the field to ſeek honey to eat, but brings it not into the Maſters hive.

Secondly, A man may be Gods, and not diſcern it: for theſe are diſtinct. *Epheſ.* 1.13. *In whom alſo after that ye beleeved,* A man may be Gods, and not diſcern it.

ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe. Mark, after ye beleeved, ye were ſealed. 1 *John* 5.13. *Theſe things have I written to you that beleeve on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternall life, and that ye may beleeve on the name of the Son of God.* Mark the ſpeech here; I have written unto you that do beleeve —— that ye may beleeve. Whats this? Why, you that beleeve with a faith of Adherence, that ye may come to aſſurance (which yet ye want) that ye may KNOW that ye have eternall life. *Gal.*4.6. *Becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, whereby ye cry Abba Father.* Firſt ye are Sons, and afterwards cry *Abba* Father, by the Spirit. The being of a man in Chriſt, goeth before his knowing he is ſo in order of nature; for a thing muſt be, before I can know it; elſe I know a lie. A Child muſt be the child of ſuch a man before he knoweth he is ſo: So it is in our ſpirituall relation. Therefore ye cannot conclude ye are none of Gods, becauſe you want aſſurance for the preſent: for ye may be Gods and know it not.

Object. But ſome may ſay, This is to preach liberty, for every man may ſay ſo.

Anſw. I anſwer, not ſo; For this which is in ſuch a child of God as doth not know it by clear evidence, yet it is working, and differeth him from all others in the world. The ſeed of God hath a two-fold work in ſuch a one.

1. It maketh him an obedient man. *Iſa.* 50.10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voyce of his ſervants; that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light?* Mark, A child of God, though he be in the dark, yet he fears the Lord, and obeys. That though he knows not himſelf to be Gods, yet he would walk with God in every duty; though he have chains and fetters oftentimes to hinder him; yet in every duty there is a principle and tie of obedience, yea, and ſuch as is mixt with Love. For he ſeeth God lovely, and that draws his affections to him, and makes him willing to ſerve him, though he be not ſure of him.

2. Though ſuch a ſoul do not diſcern it ſelf to be Gods, yet it is acccompanied with earneſt longings, and earneſt ſeekings of

of the manifestation of his face to him: So that though he cannot yet make sure his Calling and Election; yet he gives all diligence to make it sure, as *Peter* speaks: and that because he would be more usefull to God. Herein a true Christian differs from all the idle and neuter professors in the world. 2 *Pet.* 1.

Why a man may be Gods, and not know it.

Now a man may be Gods, and not know it, for these causes.

1. Because he is in forming and fashioning for God; for Gods Spirit that dwelleth in man, makes ready the house before he manifests his abode there: So that now he may be under Gods hand in forming him, and yet not know his intereſt in him for the present.

2. This not knowing may be in a man formed, regenerated; by reason he may be,

1. Of a cavilling spirit, and see such infirmities in himself as he thinks are not accompanied with the Spirit of grace. And secondly by mistaking; when the poor soul looks upon sins of intrusion, as sins of admission, and dominion. Or thirdly, because he wants that perfection that he would or should have; And by looking upon some places of Scripture he sees he wants that which the Scripture calls him to; Now in his apprehension he is not a son of God, but this cannot conclude him so.

Secondly.

The second troublesome thonght.

Another thought or doubt that riseth in the heart, which troubles the poor soul, as the text speaks, is, That Christ hath left him, cast him off, will not shew him any more mercy, nor come again to him: indeed it hath felt Christ sweet, and comfortable; those were happy dayes; But now (alas) Christ is gone, and he fears he will never come again. And this was in the disciples in some measure; as appears by the plaister to the sore, administred by the Soul-Physitian. *It is I*, saith Christ. And in another place, *Let not your heart be troubled*, John. 14. 1. And vers. 3. *I will come again and take you to my self, that where I am, there ye may be also.* And vers. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless*: How will

that appear? Why, I will come to you. So John. 16. 4. 5. 6. *He ſheweth that the thought of his abſence filled their hearts with ſorrow. The hiding of Gods face troubles the poor ſoul extreamly.* Job 34. 29. *If he give peace, who then can make trouble? but if he hide himſelf, who then can behold him?* &c. Pſal. 30. 6. Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled. So ſaith David, Pſal. 13. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me O Lord, for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? how long ſhall I take counſel in my ſoul, having ſorrow in my heart daily?* The apprehenſion that God hath hidden his face, fils the ſoul with conſultations and diſtempers; for thoſe that do afflict themſelves, oftentimes harp upon this ſtring, they are forlorn, and forſaken; like the Stranger, *Iſa.* 56. 3. The Lord hath utterly ſeparated me from his people. And like the *Eunuch*, I am a dry tree. Why ſo? why the ſpirit is ſo dead, and ſo unwildy in holy duties, ſo looſe, and baſe, he can bring his heart to nothing; Sure God hath left him: I am a dry tree, ſaith the *Eunuch*, no ſap of grace, all comfort is gone; And thus the poor ſoul crys out.

To ſpeak to this caſe, firſt I will reprove this. And ſecondly confute it.

This caſe ſpoken to,

1. By way of reproof.

1. Let me reprove it.

1. Why ſhouldſt thou be more cruel to thy ſelf then God is, challenge thy ſelf when God doth not? Zach. 4. 10. *Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?* God doth not. Becauſe thou art weak, to conclude, thou haſt nothing, this argues but a heady, peeviſh ſpirit. Pſal. 31. 22. *I ſaid in my haſte, I am cut off from before thine eyes; Nevertheleſs, thou heardeſt the voice of my ſupplications when I cryed unto thee.* This concluſion was his headineſs and haſte you ſee.

2. Conſider, thou haſt enough to do to nouriſh thy heart againſt juſt ſorrow and fear: Thou needſt not nouriſh unneceſſary fears. Chriſt ſaith, Sufficient to the day is the ſorrow of it; thou hadſt not need add more. Doſt thou think conſcience of ſin is not matter enough, but thou muſt add want of comfort to it? take heed. *Mat. 6.*

3. Check thy ſelf, as the Prophet, Pſal. 42. *Why art thou caſt*

caſt down O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted in me? For by entertaining theſe diſcouragements, thou laiſt a block againſt thy own mercy, and where wilt thou have cure? God will not work peace, but by the co-working and accepting of thy own conſcience: Therefore herein thou art cruel, like the *Oſtrich*, and worſe then the *Sea calf*.

4. Take heed: Thou maiſt ſink thy ſpirits ſo low, that thou maiſt loſe thy ſelf in ſorrow. Extream paſſion takes away ſenſe, that is certain: And as a man may be drowned, buried, loſt in pleaſure, ſo in ſorrow. Iſa. 38. 15. *I ſhall go ſoftly all my years in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.* See how *Hezekiah* was loſt in diſcouragement; take heed that you do not unfit your ſelves for ſpiritual joy, when God ſhall ſend it.

Secondly Let me confute thee.

2. By way of confutation.

Thou ſaiſt I am caſt off, I have no grace of God, no hope of mercy: and here thy ſoul is toſſed, and clouds over-ſhadow, that riſe thick one after another. Thou miſtakeſt thy ſelf.

1. Conſider the indiſſolvible nature of the love of God; man, thou canſt not break it. Hoſ. 2. 19. 20. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgement, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* And mark, the Lord ſaith, not in THY loving kindneſs; But MY loving kindneſs, &c. While God hath any of theſe, he cannot break. So *Rom.* 4. 16. The promiſe is ſure to all the ſeed. So that we cannot ſhake our ſelves out of the ſtate of ſalvation, becauſe the buſineſs is acted in God, and built, and ſtabliſhed in him.

2. Conſider, that as Gods grace is mutual, ſo Gods judgements are mutual: If ever he chooſe thee, he gives thee a heart to chooſe him: And if he loath thee, he leaves thee to a heart to loath him. Zach. 11. 8. *My ſoul loathed them,* (ſaith God) *and their ſoul alſo abhorred me.* So that if thou have

have not caſt God off, and ſaieſt that man ſhall not rule over me; If thou continue with God in duty, he hath not yet caſt thee off; For he that God caſts off, frets and fumes againſt the Commandment, whereas the Soul that is humbled, admires the Commandment, but comes ſhort of it, as *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. The Commandment is holy, and juſt, and good; though he came ſhort in walking up to it.

3. Conſider, God taketh on by caſting off; why then doeſt thou ſay thou art caſt off? Gods death is a way to life; I mean, that God giveth thee over to death on this faſhion. Canſt thou ſay, I am caſt off from God? why this very complaint ſheweth thou art taken on. For deſertion is a part of Gods diſcipline. Hoſ. 5. 15. *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their iniquity, and ſeek my face.* God caſts off, that they may cleave to him. 1. Sam. 14. 14. God reſpecteth not any perſon; yet doth he deviſe means that his baniſhed be not expelled from him. The woman ſent by *Joab* to *David* to ſpeak to him about the bringing *Abſolom* back, ſhe pleads it from Gods manner of dealing with his baniſhed; which is firſt to baniſh a poor ſoul, and then deviſe means to bring them back again to him. So that if this be Gods diſcipline, and Chriſt give thee up to languiſh under terrors and fears, and ſo to hold thee under holineſs; Then thou concludeſt wrong, that therefore God will caſt thee off.

4. Conſider, affliction of ſpirit may riſe from other cauſes, and not becauſe I am caſt off of God. And God hath gracious ends in hiding himſelf from a ſoul, and not the deſerting, or utter forſaking of a ſoul.

In what reſpect a man may ſay he hath no grace.

1. Thou maiſt ſay thou haſt no grace in compariſon of other men, becauſe thou haſt the ſame means, and haſt not ſo much grace, (as thou conceiveſt) muſt thou therefore ſay thou haſt no grace? What if they have more need of it? It may be they may be of a more perverſe ſpirit, more proud, ſtubborn, or ſelfiſh, more apt to run aſide from God; And ſo have need of more; Nay, it may be they have more temptations in the way of their callings, or more oppoſitions from carnal freinds, or enemies then thou haſt,

2. Thou

2. Thou mayst say thou hast no grace in regard of sutableness to the means thou hast had; as Hebr. 5, 12. *For whereas for the time you ought to have been teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God: And are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.* When thou complainest I have had a great deal of means, and am not grown under it sutable to the means I have had; This is a good trouble; for herein is thy spirit poor; And spiritual poverty never casts thee off from God.

3 Thou mayst complain thou hast no grace in respect of thy desires and purpose of heart: Thou hast over-bidden thy self man, and that troubles thee. I did hope to have gotten further in Gods waies by this time then I have done; To have over-mastered such a lust; To have had more self-denial; To have glorified God better in my place; I can get my heart to nothing: I had hoped I should have been better content with crosses, and born affliction with more patience then I do. Now thus to be afflicted, is acceptable to God. Suppose a weak sickly child should sit weeping in the chimney corner, and being asked what aild it? it should answer, why I had hoped by this time to have done my father better service, and to have been more useful to him: He is tender of me, and I can do nothing in requital of his love again: Now the father of this child seeing its affection, takes it as kindly as if it did perform what it desires. So it is with God; 2. Cor. 8. 12. *If there be first a willing minde, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* So that now for this we must not judge our selves cast off of God: God would not have us lye for his glory. *Rom.* 3. 7. 8. nor our salvation; much less for damnation.

Again, consider what ends the Lord hath in keeping close his countenance, and hiding his face sometimes from a soul that is dear to him.

1. To bring such a soul to self examination, to look narrowly into their own hearts, and to search out some corruption which it may be they do not see for the present. And

Gods ends in hiding his face from a soul.

it is a great benefit to have discovery made of those traitors that lie lurking within, that a man seeth not; And this God usually brings the soul to by hiding his countenance. Psal. 77. When the Spirit of the Psalmist was overwhelmed, and the thought of God troubled him, and his soul refused to be comforted, *And he cried unto God, and still his sore ran in the night, and ceased not, and his eies were held waking, and he was so troubled tha he could not speak*; as ver. 1. 2. 3. 4. Now saith he in the 6. vers. *I commune with mine own heart, and my Spirit made diligent SEARCH.* Now he falleth a Searching what the matter was; And inquires, will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? and doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. Mark here, upon serious search he durst not tax God, nor his mercy, nor promise: But mark, he finds it out now where it was, ver. 10. And I said, This is my infirmity. By this means he finds out some weakness in the soul, which before he saw not. So that this was beneficial to him; for God would have no sin harbour and lurk in the souls of his Saints.

2. By this means the Lord brings a man or woman to the confession of sin: And we are all proud by nature, and are loth to come to acknowledge our sins: Now the Scripture saith, *He that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* And if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness. Now God in mercy to a soul (when he sees they are willing to connive and wink at some beloved sin which they would favour, and are ready to say as *David*, deal gently with the yong man *Absalom*; or as *Naaman*, The Lord be merciful to thy servant concerning this thing;) withdraws his face, to shew them his dislike against every sin, and to bring them to a free and willing confession of it. So it was with *David*, Psal. 32. 3. 4. 5. *While I kept silence (that is from acknowledging my sin) my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long; for day and night thy*

thy hand was heavy upon me: my moyſture was turned into the drought of ſummer. Selah. *I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I ſaid I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.* Selah. *So* Hoſea. 5. 15. *I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and ſeek my face. Till then* (ſaith God) *I will hide my face.*

3. God ſometimes hides his face that his people might ſee that they are nothing in and of themſelves: But that all their ſufficiency is of God: That they may ſee their own emptineſs, that they can do nothing, bear nothing, mannage nothing to Gods glory without a ſpecial aſſiſtance from God; That they may learn to deny themſelves, and live upon him alone. Iſa. 57. 17. *I hid me, and was wroth:* (ſaith the Lord) *and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. When God hides himſelf, then the frowardneſs of the heart appears.* So hereby the ſervants of God are kept humble, from ſelf glorying or boaſting.

4. Sometimes the Lord by the hiding of his countenance, trieth the graces of his ſpirit in his ſervants, that it may appear to them that they are ſound right works. As ſometimes he tries their faith by this means, Iſa. 50. 10. 11. *Is there any among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervants, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* To try if they will hold and hang upon him, and follow him, though he frown upon them, as the woman of *Canaan* did, That he may ſay to them at laſt, as he did to her, great is thy faith. And this will be a ſweet ſatisfaction to them, when they come to ſee that though they ſaw not Gods face, yet they found his grace to enable them to wait upon him in dark times. It is a pretious thing to have faith tried. 1 Pet. 1. 7. and this way God trieth it. Again, hereby God trieth the ſincerity of your love to him. As, *Cant.* 5. 6. 7. 8 *When Chriſt had withdrawn himſelf from his ſpouſe, ſhe fals ſick of love; it works; ſhe* could not be quiet, nor ſatisfied without him; her affection runs out after him, though ſhe wanted the diſcovery

of him, and this affection of hers puts her upon a conſtant ſeeking of him: as *Cant.* 3. 1. 2. *By night upon my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loved; I ſought him, but I found him not. I will riſe now and go about the city —— and ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth; &c.* It tryeth their ſincerity, whether they will ſtick cloſe to his work, though they ſee no reward; as that place *Iſa.* 50. 10. 11. *Whether they will fear the Lord, and obey him, though he hide himſelf.*

5. Sometimes the Lord doth it, to bring thee to the ſight of thy Negligence, deadneſs, dulneſs, Security, Senceleſneſs, that you are apt to ſlip into: And to make thee ſee thy unkind dealing with him; that putſt him off with idle excuſes for ſelf ends, when he would have manifeſted himſelf. So *Cant.* 5. When Chriſt had withdrawn himſelf, then ſhe comes to remember how unkind ſhe was to let him call, and beg for admittance, and wait till his head was filled with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night. She could make excuſes when he was ſo neer her: I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? But when he was gone, then ſhe remembreth her ſlothfulneſs with ſorrow; and then ſhe confeſſeth her Negligence, my ſoul failed when he ſpake: verſ. 6. As if ſhe had ſaid, My heart ſmote me: I knew it was he, yet this ſleepy ſpirit of mine overcame me, and now I muſt ſmart for it.

6. That the Soul might prize him the more when he manifeſts himſelf again to the ſoul, that there might be the ſweeter imbraces between him and the ſoul; As it is with a perverſe child, the mother ſometimes is fain to hide her ſelf from it, and call for the Bug-bear to take it, that it may be quiet and more eſteem of the mother when it hath her again. The child cryes out as if ſhe were quite gone: but ſhe ſtands neerer it then it is aware of; ſhe intends not to forſake it. So the people of God in their dark times greatly miſtake, to ſay God hath utterly forſaken them, *Iſa.* 49. 13. 14. *Sion ſaid, the Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* Here is the poor Diſcouraged ſouls concluſion: But what ſaith the Anſwer of God to it? Can a woman for-

get

get her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion upon the ſon of her womb? Yea they may: yet will not I forget thee ſaith the Lord. When we look upon the countenance of God, as we do upon the Sun ſhining every day as a common thing, then he clouds himſelf from us, that we may learn to ſet an higher rate upon it; and that there may be more endeared imbracings when we meet with the Lord again. *Cant* 3.4. *After ſhe had ſought for her beloved, and miſt of him, at laſt ſaith ſhe, I found him Whom my ſoul loveth*; and how was ſhe affected then? *Oh ſaith ſhe, I held him, and would not let him go, &c.* Then ſhe Clings to him with more delight and affection then ever. So the bowels of the Lord (as I may ſo ſpeak) do more yearn upon a poor ſoul after his withdrawings then ever, as *Iſa.*54.6,7,8. *The Lord hath called thee, as a woman forſaken and grieved in ſpirit, and a Wife of youth, When thou Waſt refuſed, ſaith thy God.* This is a ſad time; But now mark how he makes up for this, *For a SMALL moment have I forſaken thee, But with GREAT MERCYES I will gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlaſting kindneſs Will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

7. The Lord hides himſelf ſometimes from a poor ſoul for the regulating of the prayers and deſires of his people: Many times we are begging and crying for things of leſſer conſequence, and our minds are much upon the ſerving of ſelf; Now God would have us to ſeek him, & his face and countenance as the chiefeſt thing: Therefore ſometimes withdrawes that he may draw up our prayers higher, and put our affections into better order then they were. *Hoſ.*5.15. *I will go, and return to my place till they ——ſeek my face: In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* Now it is Gods command to ſeek his Face evermore. *Pſal.*105.4.

8. That his Excellency, Sweetneſs, Beauty, Lovelineſs, might be ſet forth by thoſe that want the manifeſtations of his countenance, unto others that take notice of their diſtempered ſad condition, that they may be moved alſo to ſeek after his diſcoveries. God is pleaſed by this means ſometimes

to ſweeten himſelf to others that ſtand by, and behold the agony poor ſouls are in for want of his love manifeſted to them: And to ſtir up their Spirits to look after him, He is pleaſed to help ſuch diſtreſſed men to preach him forth ſweetly for the winning of others to him. This you may ſee at large *Cant.* 5. *The ſpouſe after ſhe was raiſed from her drouſineſs, and ſees Chriſt was gone, ſhe is extreamly troubled; Sick of love, as verſ.* 8. *Whereupon the daughters of Jeruſalem inquire, what is thy beloved more then another beloved, O thou faireſt among women? What is thy beloved more then another beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* What is, He a None-ſuch? may not another ſerve thy turn as well as he? What is in him more then is in another? See now, what glorious apprehenſions ſhe had of him now in his abſence; And how ſhe preacheth him unto them to the affecting of their hearts; *verſ.* 10. *&c. My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand; his head is as the moſt fine gold, &c.* And ſo ſhe goes on in a glorious commendation of him to the end of the *Chapter*; And *verſ. ult.* ſaith ſhe, *He is altogether lovely, or all delights; This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.* See now, how this takes upon their Spirits, *Chap.* 6. 1. *Whether is thy beloved gone, O thou faireſt among women? whither is thy beloved turned aſide? that we may ſeek him with thee.* Mark how his hiding himſelf from his ſpouſe, conduceth to the calling of other poor ſouls to the ſeeking after Chriſt: When they ſee them mourning, and grieving, and complaining, and cannot reſt without him, thinks the poor ſoul there is ſome excellency in him that we ſee not; we will certainly go along to ſeek him with theſe poor ſouls; he is worth ſeeking after: And ſo it ſets them a flame after him alſo.

Thirdly.

The third thought is, when the Soul complains it hath none of the Spirit.

The third Thought that riſeth in the heart, to trouble the ſoul, and perplex it, is this: I have none of the Spirit of God. Now Chriſt commands *John* 4. *To worſhip God in the ſpirit.* And *Gal.* 5. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill*

fill the luſts of the fleſh; and *Jude* 20. *Praying in the holy ghoſt*. But how ſhould I do this, that have not the Spirit? feel him not working, nor quickening, nor comforting me: my heart is ſo dead, and looſe, and weary in duty, never carried up to heaven; how can I but be troubled? When you are carried with a fiery Chariot into heaven, then you think you have the ſpirit: But when a man moves in a lower Region, he thinks he hath it not.

I ſhall ſpeak to this 1. Generally. 2. More Particularly.

Generally thus.

1. That it is a very good thing to have the Spirit, or to miſs it. As in hearing the word, in prayer, conference, Meditation, &c. Either to feel a man hath it, or to feel he wants it. And the worſt of theſe is better then to reſt in a duty ſhaped out of your own Brain, conſiſting in an empty ſound of expreſſions and words. For ye muſt take heed ye do not content your ſelves with ſhadowes and phraſes, without the Spirit; For God doth not know the meaning of ſuch duties. *Rom.*8. Generall obſervations to this caſe.

2. Conſider, the ſpirit hath a manifold work in the hearts of the children of God. Now a man cannot reaſon from the want of ſuch a fruit of the Spirit, as joy, or peace, &c. that therefore he hath not the Spirit. Ye cannot reaſon thus, A man doth not Laugh, Therefore he doth not Live. Weeping is a ſign of life as well as laughter. So it is in this Caſe; The ſenſe of ſin may argue the Spirit of God to be in you, as well as the feeling of Joy. *Zach.*12 10. *I will pour upon them the SPIRIT of grace, and the Spirit of ſupplications; And they ſhall look upon me whom they have peirced, and ſhall MOURN for him, as one mourneth for his onely Son: And be in BITTERNES, &c.* The Spirit, is a Spirit of variety, 1 *Cor.*12. *Giving to one this gift, to another that gift: to one Humility, Poverty of ſpirit, Self deniall, Godly ſorrow: to another Zeal, and Courage, and Joy &c.* And ſo it is oftentimes in the

the ſame man, ſometimes it is tuning his godly ſorrow, ſometimes his joy, ſometimes his fear, &c. And this is one ground of the variety of conditions the Saints are in, as *David*, ſometimes ye find him ſinging on the uppermoſt branch of the tree, and ſometimes hanging his wing in the bottome of the hedg; Sometimes calling upon himſelf to praiſe the Lord ſeven times a day: And ſometimes crying out that he was caſt out of Gods ſight. So *Job* ſometimes profeſſing, *though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him*; And ſometimes changing his note; *If I had called and he had anſwered me, yet I would not believe that he had hearkned to my voice.* The Church ſpoken of in the Lamentations, Sometimes lamenting, *my ſtrength and my HOPE is periſhed from the Lord*; and ſometimes again confeſſing I have HOPE. *Paul* had the ſpirit as well in his buffetings, as in his rejoycings. And *David*, when he prayed *reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation*, as when he felt it. The Spirit led Chriſt to be tempted, as well as ſupported him, and brought him back into *Galilee: Luke* 4. 1. &c. A man may have the ſpirit in the Fight, as well as in the Triumph. He hath the ſpirit that ſoweth to the ſpirit in Tears, as well as he that reaps in joy. Therefore you may be miſtaken in ſaying you have not the ſpirit, ſeing it works ſo variouſly.

*Pſal.*119.164
*Pſal.*31.22.
*Job.*13.15.
*Job.*9.16.
*Lam.*3.18. 22.
*Pſal.*51.
*Pſal.*126.5.6.

3. This ſpirit may exerciſe it ſelf in thee in duties one way, though it be not felt but another way: as in prayer, ſometimes tuning thy love, ſometimes thy hatred, ſometimes thy humility, ſometimes thy joy. Therefore do not wrong the ſpirit of God and ſay it is from home, becauſe you feel not joy. Do not ſay it is idle; for it may be working in another room, tuning another grace. If a man ſhould alwaies touch one key, he ſhould never play various tunes. Now our hearts are Gods Harps. *Rev.* 14. 2. and 15. 2. And therefore if God ſhould not tune them variouſly, there would be no melody. And if the ſpirit be not ſetting up a candle in thee, it may be ſcouring of a candle-ſtick: I mean, If it be not filling thy heart with joy, it may be preparing thy heart for joy.

4. There

4. There may be workings of the ſpirit in the heart, and yet ye may not perceive it is the working of the ſpirit. As in a peice of blunt money, that ye can ſee no mark upon, you will ſay, by the bigneſs it ſhould be ſuch a piece, ſix pence, or a nine-pence, but I can ſee nothing upon it. So there may be workings of the ſpirit that are not ſeen for the preſent: and yet afterward, when the ſpirit worketh another way, then thou maiſt perceive that this was of the ſpirit. *Luk.* 24. The diſciples that went to *Emmaus*, knew not Chriſt while he was opening the Scriptures to them, which was the likelieſt time; yet they knew him in breaking bread: And *ver.* 32. then they could call to minde the burning of their hearts by the way. Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked to us by the way, and opened to us the Scriptures? juſt as it is in our buſineſſes in the world, many ſecret providences, which a man doth not ſee to be a providence, till after by ſome other iſſue he cals it to minde, and ſees it a providence: So God hath his glory at laſt. As *Zaccheus* climbing up into the figtree, what could a man pick out of it? till afterward that Chriſt tells him he muſt abide at his houſe: then it appeared to be a providence. So in the Diſciples being ſo importunate with Chriſt to ſtay, when he made as if he would have gone further, they ſaw nothing in it for the preſent: but afterward when Chriſt was diſcovered to them, then they ſaw it was of God. Theſe were works of the ſpirit, as the event did ſhew: But they ſaw them not for the preſent, till the further work of the ſpirit did manifeſt them: Then they ſaw all theſe to have been of the ſpirit. So if a man have a work in his heart, that he can make little of: I would counſel that man to follow on, to ſee what will come of it afterward: for it may be after ſome other work of the ſpirit he ſhall perceive it, though for the preſent he ſee it not.

Now for particular diſcerning of the ſpirit in duty. Particulars how to diſcern the ſpirit in duties.

1. Doeſt thou find thy heart faſhioned, or in faſhioning,

to a perſonal love of Chriſt, a perſonal union with Chriſt himſelf? The Spirit of God is the Factor for Chriſt, the Spokeſman between Chriſt and the heart, to treat the marriage. So that herein the Spirit preſents Chriſt as all-fair, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand as *Can.* 5. His love, and reign, and Kingdome is preſented to thee in a glorious ſhew. Now with this, doſt thou find thy heart in faſhioning to a deſire of Union to conſent to marry with ſuch a Husband? I ſay to a perſonal love, not of his benefits, but him firſt, and then to all his benefits? To take him as God gives him, Rom. 8. 32. *If God have given us his ſon, how ſhall he not alſo with him freely give us all things?* When he is ſuch an object, that thou canſt leave Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Liberty, Life, and all for his ſake.

At firſt there may be ſelf-love; but in time, every ſpiritual man will riſe to a perſonal love of Chriſt himſelf, and not only his benefits.

2. Doth thy heart and the word, thy heart and thy petitions go together, and comply: ſo that thou art taken, and much affected with the ſweetnes of Chriſt? And ſome ſentence of Scripture or prayer that carries thee out of thy ſelf, when thy heart complies with it ſuddenly, and ſtrangely: I mean, art thou wonderfully raviſhed, and carried out of thy ſelf deſires and ends, to God and for God? It argues the ſpirit.

3. Are there any graces ſet a work evengelically in thy heart; Love, Humility, Sincerity, or the like? That is, If thy Faith or love be ſet a work by the love of God to thee: Doth the freſh preſentings of the love of Chriſt to thee in thy duties, freſhen thy love to him, and thy graces in thy heart? This is an Argument of the Spirit; When our hearts give Eccho to Gods voice. Pſal. 27. 8. *When thou ſaideſt ſeek ye my face: My heart anſwered, Thy face Lord will I ſeek.* This was the Spirit of God that thus ſets the heart a work to Anſwer to Gods voice.

4. Are your hearts moved from the feeling of the experience of the love of Chriſt, to give your ſelves to Chriſt again in

in duty? This is the Spirit of God. For the heart cannot be carried directly to Chriſt for Chriſt, but by the Spirit of Chriſt. 2 Cor. 12. 9. 10. *And he ſaid, my grace is ſufficient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs. Moſt gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Chriſt might reſt upon me. Therefore I take pleaſure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Neceſſities, in Perſecutions, in Diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake:* See here is doing or undergoing any thing for Chriſt. And mark from what ground, even from experience; for when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.

5. Obſerve the manner of the combat, which the heart hath againſt the world, or the fleſh, or any beloved ſin. There may be a Combat in wicked men, between ſin, and ſhame; Between conſcience, and fear of Hell; between deſire, and fear: Therefore mark, when ſin draws thee, with what weapons thou fighteſt againſt ſin. Is it the love of God that makes thee thou wilt not ſin? Doſt thou ſay I will not becauſe I love God? is thy heart drawn to God Evangelically? Here is the Spirit luſting againſt the fleſh: not conſcience againſt ſin. The manner of the fight, ſhews whoſe the fight is: For the Spirit of God cauſeth a man to ſet the love of God, and the promiſe of God, as the only Arrow againſt ſin. Here it is evidenced to be the Spirit.

6. A man may know the Spirit by the diſcovery of ſin: for the Spirit may evidence it ſelf in an humble diſcovery of ſin, as well as joy, in working the heart to ſelf loathing. It diſcovers ſpiritual ſins, bye and baſe aims and ends; ſecret, and by-reſpects, when a man looks aſquint from God; ſecret and by-turnings of the heart, that never came into the eye of the world. I ſay, the diſcovery of ſin is an excellent work of the Spirit. Ezek. 36. 31. *I will pour upon them my Spirit,* (ſaith the Lord) And what then? *Then ſhall ye remember your waies and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your iniquities, and your abominations.* To diſcover ſins ſo far as they are a deteſtation to the

heart; ſo far as they are a bar to the raigning of Chriſt.

The fourth troubleſome thought is a mans queſtioning the truth of his converſion.

The fourth thought that riſeth in the heart, and troubleth it, is this, whether his tranſlation into the ſtate of grace be in truth or no? whether he hath the ſound work of regeneration or no? For (ſaith the heart) there are many ſemblances and ſhaddowes of grace; True faith, and falſe; True love, and falſe; like on another: falſe *Samuels*, ni *Samuels* mantle. And if a man ſeriouſly weigh himſelf, his good againſt his bad; His ſanctification, againſt his corruptions; His obedience againſt his rebellions, and blemiſhes; his faith, with his diſtruſt; and his new work, with the old man remaining. If he weigh this, he ſticks, and cannot tell which is the heavier in the ballance: But as preſumption and pride makes a man think the beſt of himſelf; ſo many times when a Godly man is humbled (eſpecially when a grain of Melancholy is mixt with it) it makes him think the worſt of himſelf; And hereupon a Godly man many-times queſtions himſelf, and thinks alls naught with him; And ſo he queſtions whether his grace be grace or no; And now his heart is troubled, and doubts and diſcouragements riſe in it.

Now the ground of theſe diſcouragements in this kind are ſuch things as theſe.

Grounds of this thought

1. He ſaith, He cannot ſay nor ſee, That he was brought in to God at the firſt by any remarkable work of Humiliation, or by any ſuch converſion as will witneſs to it ſelf by any hand of God as ſome others have been: Therefore he begins to Queſtion his graces.

2. He finds ſome peculiar ſins and corruptions, that hath hung upon him long, and hath haunted him a long time; whither they be omiſſions, looſneſs of heart, &c. that hath haunted him a long time: And hence he is troubled, and Queſtions his converſion.

3. He hath Diſcovered new ſins and corruptions which before he did not obſerve, after a long time in the ſtate of grace; And finds new ones which he did not know of: And he knows not but there may be more behind. And ſo fear ariſeth.

4. He

4. He finds his heart many times looſe in ſpirituall duties, the thoughts thereof roaring and ranging this way and that way, when his heart ſhould be kept to God. By-thoughts come thick upon him as motes in the Sun, and he is as ſure to be haunted with them, as to find his ſhadow in the Sun. And hence he is troubled.

5. He doth not find that growth in the Inward marrow of Religion that ſhould be in him anſwerable to his time and means of knowledge. For though he grant he hath grown in Knowledge, and ſome externall parts and gifts, as utterance, and the gifts of Prayer, and Propheſie &c. yet he finds not that he is grown in Spirit, and inward acquaintance with Chriſt.

6 He finds the exerciſe of his graces, Faith, Love, Patience, &c. failing ſometimes when he hath moſt need of them: And that the Diſpoſition of his heart in the cauſe of God ſometimes fails, comes ſhort of that activity that ſhould be in it: And the exerciſes of his graces in putting forth, are manytimes ſtained.

7. He cannot attain to ſomething that he ſees in other men, that peradventure were after him in Chriſt, and are inferior in gifts: yet he cannot attain to that life of Grace he ſees in them, nor to that Humility, nor Love, nor deſire, nor reſoluteneſs for truth, nor ſelf-deniall, nor Heavenly-mindedneſs; And hence he fears his condition.

8. He finds he enjoyes God leaſt many times when he ſets himſelf the beſt about it, and goes about to fit his Soul to entertain Chriſt, as in faſting, &c.

9. He hath hurt the Cauſe of God, when God hath brought him upon the ſtage to have done ſomething for God: perhaps to have ſuffered for God; And upon this, queſtions the truth of his grace.

10. He hath oftentimes relapſed it into the ſame ſin which formerly he hath purſued with particular ſorrow and grief; And prayed and reſolved againſt it; and this troubles him.

11. He hath grieved the Spirit, and neglected Chriſt for trifles, for ſmal matters, things of the world, vain pleaſures, &c.

12. Laſtly, He hath found his heart apt to take liberty, and to be looſe, when Occaſion and opportunity hath ſuited to him: when he might be ſecret from the eye of man, cloſe, and hath had an opportunity to enjoy his ſelf-pleaſure, he hath found his heart looſe. And from ſuch like grounds as theſe, he is many-times caſt into reaſonings, and Queſtioning the truth of his ſtate, whether his converſion were ever right, and ſo he is troubled.

How to ſetle a Man oppreſſed with this thought.

Now for the ſetling of a mans ſtate that is thus incumbred; And to cut of all Queſtions and diſputes, which the heart of man may breed: What if there may be a ſhorter courſe taken for the ſetling of a mans heart, then to ſtand weighing of a mans Graces and corruptions together? for though the leaſt piece of money hath ſome diſtinct ſtamp upon it, that a man may know it from a Counter; And every grace in a mans ſoul hath ſome mark of truth upon it; Yet I ſay, what if there be another courſe, that a Chriſtian may take, when his own heart raiſeth ſtorms in this manner, to take another courſe to clear it from ſuch Rocks and Shelvs?

And that is,

Generall propoſitions tending to the peace of ſuch a ſoul.

In theſe Caſes, And in all theſe Caſes, to go immediately to Chriſt by faith; And to caſt your ſelves upon him; yea to caſt away your ſelves upon him, not ſo much as queſtioning what ſhall become of you; but to go out immediately to him. Yea, I ſay, though your hearts be full of deceit and Hypocriſie; yet I would go out for all this, and intrude upon Chriſt (as I may ſay) by an impudent kind of beleeving: and ſay thus;

Lord, If my graces give me no comfort, Chriſt ſhall; And ſay thus, *God hath laid in Sion for a Foundation a Stone, a tryed ſtone, a precious Corner ſtone, a ſure Foundation. Iſa.* 28. 16. *And he that beleeveth on him, ſhall not be confounded.* 1 *Pet.* 2. 6.

Now there muſt be a courſe taken to keep the heart from wrangling: For ſome may ſay, what is this to beleeve in a Stone? That

That is, to be in, and to be by faith built upon Chriſt; And by faith to lie faſt in the faſt lieing of this Stone: And in the faſt levelling and laying of this ſtone, would I lie faſt. Friends, If your Graces yeeld you but a little comfort; then preſently flie to Chriſts perſon, and perſonal offices: I would have you flie from your ſins to Chriſt, and I would have you flie from your graces to Chriſt too; For he is the Boat to receive you both from damning ſins, and imperfect graces; for the Alſufficiency of Chriſt needs not thy graces to make it perfect, as if he could not ſave thee without the perfection of thy graces. Thus doing, thou ſhalt honour Chriſt above, and ſweeten him more then thy own graces: And if at any time thy heart wrangle thee out of thy graces, yet let it never wrangle thee out of Chriſt. If thy graces be a quagmire, that thou ſhake upon them, then Chriſt is a Stone lies firm. A man may truſt too much upon his graces, but he cannot truſt too much upon Chriſt. A man may take too much hold upon the Mil ſailes, (for a man may take ſo faſt hold he may be turned about) but not upon the mil-poſt. Learn the uſe of Faith, which is of ſingular uſe to carry thee out of thy ſanctified ſelf, to live out of thy ſelf, to build out of thy ſelf, to carry thee by faith and hope out of thy ſelf to Chriſt. *Gal.* 2. 20. *The life that I live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God; who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* See how *Paul* lives here, not by any thing but faith in Chriſt. I am crucified with Chriſt; nevertheleſs I live (ſaith he) yet not I: Leſt any ſhould think he lived upon his graces and ſanctification, He addes, *But Chriſt liveth in me*; Now leſt any ſhould dream that there is no other Chriſt then the creature hath within in graces, qualifications, &c. he explains himſelf, *And the life that I live in the fleſh, I live by the FAITH of the Son of God.* And truely, If a mans heart will not be ſetled this way, it will ſcarce be ſetled any way.

Four conſiderable things.

Now for the uſe of faith in this caſe, there are four things conſiderable.

1. Whenſoever thou art thus puzled, labour to lay Chriſt in the other end of the ballance, againſt all objections that thy

thy heart can make: This is the ſhorteſt cut that a man can make, to plead Chriſt; yet not the outward name, which is like a charm to charm Serpents: But a faithfull oppoſing of Chriſt his merit, his Love, his Faith, his Obedience, to all that can be ſaid. And if all objections that thy heart can make, be all true, if they be thouſands; thou needeſt not be afraid of thy Inditement: For the laying of Chriſt againſt them in the Ballance will ſtill all. As a man having a Declaration againſt him, or an Indictment declared by ſome Lawyer, or cunning Sophiſter; Alas, How is this man put to it, to make his Anſwer with ſhifts and evaſions? But if he have a Pardon in his boſom, he would confeſs guilty, without fear: for here is the Broad-ſeal. Here is that that puts a man out of doubt. So here, If conſcience object all thy new and old ſins, that thou haſt done from time to time, and thou goeſt any other way to make good thy matter; to thy conſcience, and not to Chriſt: thou ſhalt be put to ſhifts, with a great deal of fear, to make thy anſwer to thy Conſcience: But now lay Chriſt in the ballance, do but plead him, and there is a full acquittance. And if conſcience object old and new ſins, now by faith lay Chriſt againſt theſe; and no more. If a man be upon a rock, the waves that beat againſt it, break themſelves, but drown not him: Becauſe he is upon a rock. So when a man goes to Chriſt, and hangs upon him by a pure faith; theſe objections break themſelves to pieces upon him: A little water it may be, may daſh in his face, but he need not fear drowning.

For the ſetling of thy ſelf in ſuch a caſe as this, by faith ſet thy ſelf before God in the confidence of the love of Chriſt, and of the obedience, righteouſneſs, and mediatorſhip of Chriſt alone; ſet thy ſelf before God in the conſideration of Chriſt only. If a ſubject dares not come before the king, to conteſt with the king concerning his loyalty; yet if the pardon be proclaimed, then he dares come, becauſe of the proclamation. So do thou: If thou dareſt not come before God in reſpect of thy ſins, yet come becauſe Chriſt is proclaimed. And now you put the caſe to another iſſue; for now you do not put your ſelvs upon trial; but you put God upon trial whether

whether he be true and faithful or no, according to the word of promise which he hath delivered in the Book of God: and so in stead of putting thy self upon trial, thou putteſt God upon trial whether he will keep his word or no. And it is a work of faith, for a man to stand before God in the Love which he bears to Christ, and in the acceptance wherewith God accepts Christ, and in the well-pleasedness wherewith he is well pleased with Christ. I stand not now before God in the way wherewith he is well-pleased with me, but in the acceptation which God bears to his son. *John* 17. 26. *And I have declared to them thy Name, and will declare it, that the Love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them; and I in them*; that is, That thy very Love to me, may redound, and be efficacious upon them. Here's a matter that puts a man out of quarrels, and Objections.

3. If so be you see an imperfection and ebbe in your graces; then by faith, put into Christs hand the managing of your graces: for as the custody and keeping of those graces which we have do belong to Christ; so doth the welding of them by Christ make them vigorous: He can make a little grace, a little faith do great things; make a mustard-seed cast a Mountain into the Sea. Dependance and resolution by faith on Christ, is that which makes a man strong; when Christ holds the plough, then there is no balk made. *Peter* had Faith when he denyed his Master, but he had it in his own hands, and it faints but not fails; Christs prayer and looks did stir it up again. Habituall grace is in a man; But assisting grace helps a man to act & do. *I can do all things through Christ that strengthneth me. Phil.* 4 and 2 *Cor* 4. 1. *As we have received mercy we faint not. These assistings are called Grace with me*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. And *Hebr.* 4. *ult. Grace to help in time of need.* This is that which bears you up; for when habituall grace is without assistings, it soon fails: as you may see in Adam.

4. Look up to Christ alone to bear the iniquity of your holy things; for he is our High-Priest that is to bear them. To him therefore flie, for we are compleat in him. *And if the Work of Sanctification in us be imperfect, the blood of* col. 2. 10.

Chriſt is abſolutely perfect : and they are coupled together. 1 *Pet.*1.2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and Sprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt,&c.*

So much for the General. Now I come to anſwer the particular objections briefly.

The firſt Ground of this fear.

1. Thou feareſt thy ſtate, and queſtioneſt thy converſion, Becauſe thou hadſt not ſo extraordinary a work at thy firſt Humiliation; not ſuch a breaking by the Law as ſome others have had: But by intermixing fits, and a ſoft way: Therefore thou feareſt.

2 *Cor.*13.5.

I anſwer. Its good indeed for every man to make proof of his ſtate, whether he have Chriſt or no: But yet we muſt not preſcribe God a way, in what order and Method he ſhall bring us in. The manner and violence of Humiliation is not eſſentiall to the bringing a man into the ſtate of grace: nor it is no matter whether God open the door with an oiled Key, or break it to pieces, ſo he open it. For the end of Humiliation is, the ingrafting of Chriſt, & ſaving grace into the Soul. And its no matter how the plough go, ſo the corn growing on the Land be as good. And no matter for the manner of Humiliation; look to the End, look to the Iſſue, look to the fruit of it. If God have not broken thy heart with the Beetle of Humiliation, but thawed it more gently; thank God for it. God made two Mediators, Moſes a typicall Mediator to *fear and quake exceedingly*: and Chriſt the true Mediator *to ſweat drops of blood and be in a pittifull agony*. And therefore if God gives thee the ſight of ſin, in the Sweetneſs of a Father, in the ſweetneſs of a Saviour, more then in the wrath of a Judge; And if thy tears have flown more from ſorrow of Love, then from ſorrow of fear; If he have given thee a new birth, in gentler pangs; it may be as true. Onely take heed to one thing, that is, that the ſweetneſs of Chriſt in his dealings, make Chriſt as ſweet to thee as thy ſowre ſins would have done it. Peradventure, if thou hadſt had ſome remarkable note of Humiliation of Soul, thou mightſt have reſted in ſome ſuch work, and have grown ſecure afterward: and the want of

*Heb.*12.

Luke 22.44.

ſuch

ſuch a thing perhaps may make thee more watchful afterward; whatſoever courſe God did take to bring thee to Chriſt, make the beſt uſe of it, and it is the beſt for thee.

But ſome may ſay, will the Scripture ſhew that Chriſt brings in men to himſelf after different manners and meaſures? Scripture proofes that Chriſts converts differently.

I anſwer, Yea, It is clear by Scripture: And for it, Conſider theſe things. The word of God (which is the ordinary means of † mans converſion) is compared to rain, *Deut.* 32.2. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the dew, my ſpeech ſhall diſtill as the rain: as the ſmall rain upon the tender hearbs, and as the ſhowers upon the graſſe.* So *Heb* 6 7.8. *For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers, &c.* Now Rain cometh ſometimes by ſudden daſhes; ſometimes more mildly like dew; ſometimes great drops, and ſometimes ſmall: ſometimes fals violently, & is quickly over; and ſometimes more moderately and holdeth longer. And if the ground be throughly ſoak't its no matter: it may as well be by a miſt, *Gen.* 2. as by great ſhowers. So the heart may as well be mollified and ſoftned by the Lords bleſſing in gentle drops diſtilled upon it as by a violent ſtorm. Our Saviour in *Mark* 4.26.27. ſeems to ſpeak of ſomes converſion and growth in an inſenſible way; the words are theſe, *So is the kingdom of God, as if a man ſhould caſt ſeed into the ground* (Seed, that is, The word of God. verſ. 14. Into the Ground; that is into the man, or heart, as the parable before clears it.) And ſhould ſleep, and riſe night and day, and the ſeed ſhould ſpring up he knoweth not how. Mark, here is effectuall workings; the ſeed takes place, yet in ſuch an inſenſible mild way, he that ſowes it knows not how: which could not be, if all that are converted to God, were brought over by ſuch violent ſtorms as ſome are.

† *Rom.* 10.14.

We read of *Paul* ſtrucken down by ſtrong hand, *Acts* 9. But where do we read of any ſuch converſion that *Timothy* had? 2 *Tim.* 3.15. ſaith *Paul, From a child thou haſt known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wiſe to ſalvation, &c.* *Luke* 19.

Chriſt called in *Zacheus* at once, come down at once, for to day I muſt abide at thy houſe; But the prodigal, was fain to be ſtarved out by degrees. Some may be in ſuch a caſe as they may be mightily preſſt at, and wounded in the heart; others may have the word dropped in more gently, by gentle inſtructions, as the *Eunuch Act.* 8. We read not of any ſuch heart-breaking, Rock-renting tempeſt that he had, and yet faith truly wrought.

Luk. 15.

To conclude, I conceive, all that the Lord brings in, he doth it by the blowing of his ſpirit. John. 3. 8. *The winde bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it comes nor whether it goeth: So is EVERY one that is born of the Spirit.* But whether it be a winde to break the Roks, or a ſtill winde; whether a high winde, or low gentle puffs, that is in Gods choiſe: whether a North winde, or South-winde, as Cant. 4. ult. *Awake thou North Winde, and come thou South; blow upon my garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* Mark it, thou canſt not ſay thy Spices flow not out, becauſe the North winde blows not: The South may make them flow out as well.

The ſecond ground of fear.

2. Thou ſaiſt, Thou haſt ſome peculiar ſins that hang upon thee, and have hanted thee a long time, omiſſion of duty, Pride, Luſt, Paſſion, &c.

I *Anſwer*, thou canſt not conclude thou haſt no grace therefore, nor thy ſtate naught becauſe of this; Gods ſervants have had corruptions hung long upon them, yet true converts; The Prophet *Jonah* had paſſion hung long upon him; And *Hebr.* 12. 1. There is mention made of the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us What meaneth the weights that hang on, and the ſin ſo eaſily beſetting us, but that it continues long? what means the continuance of the combat between the fleſh and the Spirit, but that corruption hangeth long? See how *Paul* exhorts the Coloſſians Chap. 3. 5. 6. 7. 8. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleaneſs, Inordinate affection, Evil concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs which is Idolatry. For which things ſake the Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of diſobedience. In the which*

ye alſo walked ſometime, when ye lived in them, Mark, They had walked in theſe, and now did not live in them, and yet they hung upon them ſtill, were not quite dead; for he exhorts to mortifie them: And ver. 8. *And now alſo ye, put off all theſe, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blaſphemy, Filthy communication out of your mouth; Lye not one to another*, &c. Theſe *Colloſſians* were Saints. Coll. 1. 2. Yet theſe things were not wholly put off. And Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples, *Are ye alſo yet without underſtanding? Matt.* 15. 16. Importing ignorance hung long; and *Joh.* 14. Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet thou haſt not thou known me *Philip*? * But note this, though thy corruptions hang long, and be as pricks in thy ſide, pierce thee and pain thee, yet a ſincere heart laboureth to *make profit* of his corruptions and infirmities.

* *Jonah* was ſo ſelfiſh that he rebelled, and fled to *Tarſhiſh*. And yet after God had broken him in hell, how did his ſelfiſh paſſion hang on him again? *Iohn.* 4. 1. 2. 3. 9

Whats that?

1. Theſe occaſion his godly ſorrow; as *Paul* Rom. 7. 24. complaining of the evil that was preſent when he would do good, and the law in his members rebelling, and of ſin dwelling in him, and leading him Captive, cries out ver. 24. *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* See how low thoughts he had of himſelf becauſe of this.

2. By theſe Chriſt is ſweetned to a ſincere heart; and by them Chriſt is kept within the veiw of the ſoul, to keep the heart near to Chriſt. Rom. 7. 25. *I thank God through Jeſus Chriſt. So then with my minde I ſerve the Law of God, but with my fleſh the Law of ſin.* Mark here, how precious and ſweet Chriſt is made to the ſoul by the conſideration of theſe corruptions.

3. Here is ſome comfort, though they ſtick long, if God maintain the combat within thee. The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit luſteth againſt the fleſh: So that ye cannot do the things that ye would; ye cannot, ſaith the Apoſtle. If God keep them from raigning, there is ſome comfort. *Rom.* 7. 25. *With my MIND I ſerve the Law of* Gal. 5. 17.

God, but with my fleſh the Law of ſin. His minde was upon the Law of God. There is force in ſin as in a Tyrant; But the law of ſin commanding obedience, that is not in a man in whom Chriſt is: And while the fight is maintained, thou maiſt be ſaid to conquer, though thou beeſt conquered: He that is born of God ſinneth not. For ſin hath not his will, but committeth a rape upon him. Thus while thy infirmities are cauſed by the Lord to work good in thy ſoul, they may be counted a wholſome poyſon. † And all theſe infirmities cannot be ſaid to break Covenant with God, while they do not force the heart to yeeld to them. And though they be troubleſome to thee: yet God hath ſaid Hebr. 10. *He will remember them no more.*

1 *John* 3. 9.

†But take heed of ſinning for this end: thats wickednes. *Rom.* 6. 1.

The third ground of this fear.

3. Thou ſaiſt, thou haſt diſcovered new ſins which thou never ſaweſt before, yea after a long time in the ſtate of grace; and thou knoweſt not but there may be more behind undiſcovered: And ſo thy ſtate may be bad.

I *Anſwer*, It may be ſo, that thou haſt diſcovered new ſins that thou ſaweſt not before; but let me tell thee, the ſight and knowledge of ſin is good, though ſin be not. For it may be a ſign that knowledge and light increaſeth in thee, and that ſoftneſs of heart increaſeth in thee; It is not an argument that ſin increaſeth, but that light and ſoftneſs of heart increaſeth: For if thou ſeeſt more ſins then formerly thou ſaweſt, thou diſcovereſt but what thou wouldſt know. And that doth not argue thy ſtate is naught, no more then it did Jobs, Job. 13. 23. *How many are mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion, and my ſin.* This proved not his ſtate nought. For its good for a man to diſcover one after another, that he may deal with them ſingly as it were. And it is good to ſee them ſingle; I, though it be after a long while, if it be but to keep a man out of love with his own heart: and it may be occaſion of new humblings.

Queſt. *But Was it ever ſo With the Saints of God?*

Anſ. Yea, there was paſſion diſcovered in *Job* after a long while in

in the ſtate of grace, *Job.* 3. So *Jeremiah*; Chap. 20. 14. *Curſed be the day wherein I was born.* &c. *Curſed be the man who brought tidings to my Father, ſaying a man child is born unto thee,* &c. yea and reſiſting God in his work, in reſolution at leaſt, ver. 9. *I ſaid I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak in his name,* &c. And ambition was diſcovered in the Diſciples of Chriſt, after they had been long with him, in a familiar way. *Matt.* 18. 1. They ſtrove which ſhould be the greateſt, a corruption that we ſee not breaking out before. And *Peter* had ſelf ſhewing it ſelf in him in diſſwading Chriſt from his ſufferings, and his denying his Maſter; a new ſin, that he fell not into before. And his diſſimulation for which *Paul* reproves him to his face, *Gal.* 2. yea, and *Barnabas*, that ſon of conſolation, fell into that diſſimulation, that I never read was charged upon him before. When *Jonah* ſaid I do well to be angry to death; was not this new with him? did you ever read he did ſo before? So *Davids* Adultery, and plotting *Uriahs* death. Who would have thought ſuch corruptions ſhould have ever ſtarted up in *Jeremiah* as we read of in Chap. 20. of his propheſy?

It doth not follow, that becauſe new ſins ſhew themſelves, therefore your ſtanding in the ſtate of grace is not right.

For,

A miſtake cleared.

1. It appears the ſaints are in danger of falling into new ſins by all thoſe Scriptures and examples mentioned before, and alſo by all thoſe Caveats laid down in Scripture wherein they are bidden Take heed, beware, &c.

2. The Saints have a ſubtle Adverſary, that will not ceaſe to lay baits in their way with all the willines that may be: And they may be overcome before they be aware as it were. *Gal.* 6. 1. *If a man be* OVERTAKEN *with a fault, &c.* And if new ſins diſcover themſelves, then there is new occaſion to go to Chriſt; make that uſe of them, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. *Theſe things write I unto you little children, that you ſin not; but if any man ſin, we have an Advocate, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our ſins, &c.*

4. He

4th. ground of fear.

4. He findeth his heart many times looſe in ſpiritual duties; his thoughts roving and ranging abroad, when they ſhould be kept cloſe to God; by-thoughts hanting him, and coming thick upon him, *&c.* Therefore ſure he was never right.

I Anſw. So it hath been with many of the Saints of God, that find themſelves in a ſtate of grace. *Keep thy heart with all diligence*: what need ſuch an Exhortation, if the heart were not ready to be roving? *Rom.* 7. Saith *Paul, I find* THEN *a Law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me.* THEN: when? Why when I would do good, then. *Heb.* 12. Ye have forgotten the exhortation, *&c?* where were their thoughts then, when they forgat it? And ſo we are oftentimes commanded to remember; ſhewing that thoughts are very apt to be roving. The Apoſtle ſaith *Col.* 3. 1, 2. *If ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things that are above,* &c. *Set your affections on things above, not on things below.* Which ſhews the heart, and mind, and thoughts, and affections had need be called together, they will be ſtragling, *Rev.* 3. 3. *Remember how thou haſt received and heard, and hold faſt, and Repent.*

And truly, God may ſuffer this to be, to take off your truſt from your duties, and graces, and hearts, that you may plant your truſt in God alone through Chriſt: And to ſhew you the difference between the Spirits managing of your graces, and your own managing of them: that ſo you may plant your faith in Chriſt alone. And therefore, if you find your hearts deceitful and looſe, do not conclude preſently that you have no work of grace in your hearts: for thoſe looſe by-thoughts may riſe from ſome other cauſes.

As,

Cauſes.

1. For want of conſideration what a Majeſty the preſence is that thou art in; for if we did ſeriouſly conſider that we are in the preſence of the King of Kings, the All-ſeeing God, that ſearcheth the heart and tryeth the reyns, it would make us more ſerious: A man would be afraid of playing with a Feather while he is ſpeaking to the King.

2. It

2. It may be thy affections are very cold and chill when thou comeſt to duty, and for want of Love being inflamed, thy thoughts rove; for be ſure if thou take Chriſt as thy treaſure, thy heart will be upon him. Love will make you mind the thing loved; as *David*, *Oh how do I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day.* *Mat.6.* *Pſal 119.*

3. For want of watchfulneſs and vigilancy; we are too apt to let the world and creatures take up our thoughts at other times: and then when we come to duty, and would keep them in, we cannot. For our hearts are like unruly children, if they uſe to have Liberty, they will look for it. When the heart hath got a cuſtom of looſneſs, it is hard to keep it in.

4. For want of Conſidering the Excellency of Chriſt above all things: For if thou didſt taſte and ſee the Excellency of him, it would gather up thy ſpirits to him alone: Thou wouldſt like *Paul* forgo the things that are behind, and preſs forward to the things that are before; And then thy thoughts would not ſo much rove after them. *Phil. 3.7.8. &c.*

Fifth *Objection.* A man complains, he doth not find that growth in the Inward marrow of Religion which ſhould be anſwerable to his time and means of knowledge; Though he be grown in gifts, yet he cannot find that he is grown in inward acquaintance and familiarity with Chriſt. And hence he queſtions the truth of his converſion. The fifth ground of fear.

I anſwer. Thou mayſt herein be deceived; and therefore view over thy heart and life, and try thy growth a little.

1. By thy rooting; Haſt thou taken root into Chriſt? A tree that ſpreads and lives at root, we ſay growes, though it appears not to man to grow: And becauſe thou art worſe in thy own ſight, wilt thou ſay thou groweſt not? Why man, Treesand corn grow downward, and die, or ſeemdead, before they grow upward. Thou fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened except it die, ſaith the Apoſtle. It may be God intends thy Humility, and Self-deniall, that thou mayeſt be kept low in thy own ſight; And Self-deniall is the beſt ſign of growth ſpiritually: And when the duties you perform do Tryals of growth. *1 Cor. 15.*

not ſo much pleaſe the ſoul, as the Love of God in the duty, it argues growth.

2. Men try their growth by their reaching to ſome mark ſet, as to the top of ſome bed, or beam, or pin in a wall, &c. So art thou more Heavenly minded, canſt reach neerer God in prayer, and duty? is thy affection more inlarged towards him, though thou find not him manifeſting himſelf to thee as thou deſireſt? thou art grown.

3. Men try their growth by their Ability to lift a waight, or bear a burden. So if thou Canſt not ſee that thou art any higher in affection; yet if thou Canſt ſuffer more, haſt more Patience, and contentedneſs, art able to bear more, with more conſtancy, and leſs fear &c. thou art grown.

4. By their skill; Though one may not be grown in height, yet he may be grown in wiſdom, and manlineſs. So, haſt thou more skill to uſe the ſpirituall weapons, able to find out Sathans deſigns, able to confute an errour, and give thy ſoul ſatisfaction in a truth, then heretofore? Surely it is growth.

But if this ſatisfie thee not, make uſe of ſome means in which the Lord may make thee grow.

They are ſuch as theſe.

Means of growth.

1. Caſt off all manner of ſin and corruption; Mortifie the deeds of the body by the Spirit. *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.* If the body be ſick or diſeaſed, it cannot grow, eſpecially if it be in a waſte. Why ſuch a diſeaſe is ſin: Therefore get ſin purged out by the Blood of Chriſt and faith in him; otherwiſe it will poyſon the ſoul, and then it cannot grow, as *Job* 20. 14. Speaking of a man hiding, and favouring his ſins, ſaith he, *His meat in his bowels is turned: it is the gall of Aſps within him.* This corrupts that which ſhould nouriſh him; And therefore get this out.

2. Eat thy meat; And eat wholſome meat: Feed upon Chriſt and ſound doctrine, wholſom truths: Alas, if a child eat not at all, or eat nothing but traſh, Coals, Aſhes, Earth,

Earth, &c. how ſhould he grow? So if thou feed upon vanities, and not upon the wholſome food of the word, how canſt thou grow? *Pſal.*1.1.2.3. *Bleſſed is the man that hath not walked in the councell of the ungodly, nor ſtood in the way of ſinners, nor ſate in the ſeat of the ſcorners. But his delight is in the LAW of the LORD, and in that Law doth he MEDITATE day and night.* That he takes down, and diſgeſts. Now mark how he grows, *And he ſhall be like a tree planted by the Rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his ſeaſon, whoſe leaf ſhall not wither; and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* So 1 *Pet.*2.2. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the WORD, that ye may grow THEREBY.*

3. Get as much experience of Chriſt as thou canſt: learn to taſte Chriſt in his Merits, and Offices, and Spirit. Labour ſo to grow into Chriſt, that thou mayſt not truſt to ſwellings in ſtead of growth; I mean to outward gifts. 2 *Pet.*3.18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* *Epheſ.*4.15. *Grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Chriſt.* *Col.*2.18.19. And not holding the HEAD, ſaith he; but mark the former verſ. Let no man beguil you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worſhipping of Angels, intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen, vainly pufft up with his fleſhly mind; And now mark, And not holding the head, from which all the Body by joynts and bands having nouriſhment miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God. So that if thou wouldſt grow, thou muſt ſuck of the ſap of life from Chriſt. And becauſe thou feelſt not what thou wouldſt feel in Chriſt, thou canſt not conclude thou art not grown. The Apoſtle *Epheſ.*3. prayeth for the Saints there, that they might have a greater meaſure of Excellency, and ſpiritual perfections; That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all ſaints what is the length, and bredth, and depth, and heighth And to know the Love of Chriſt that paſſeth knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fulneſs of God.

4. Be often praying to God to make thee grow, and look

up to him for help, as *Paul*, 1*Theſ.*3.12. *The Lord make you to increaſe, and abound in Love, &c.* So the Diſciples, *Luk.* 17.5. *Lord increaſe our Faith.*

5. Get a place in the Houſe of God; a ſtation in the true Church: Chriſtian Society, and fellowſhip of the Saints, is a great help to growth; There thou ſhalt hear of Chriſt, and have the excellencies of the Spirit diſpenced to thee, *Pſ.*92.13,14 *Thoſe that be planted in the HOUSE of the LORD, ſhall FLOURISH in the Courts of our God; They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in their old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* So *Heb.* 10. 23, 24, 25. *Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our Faith without wavering: for he is faithful that hath promiſed. And let us conſider one another to provoke to love and good works.* But how ſhall this be done? See, *Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is: But exhort one another, and ſo much the more as you ſee the day approaching.* In our Fathers houſe there is bread enough and to ſpare: there is all varieties to be had that may be for thy growth. Thou muſt be joynted into the building, if thou wouldſt grow, Eph.2.21. *In whom all the building fitly framed TOGETHER, groweth into an holy Temple in the Lord.* Col.3.19. *All the body by JOYNTS and BANDS, having nouriſhment miniſtred, and KNIT TOGETHER, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.*

*Luk.*15.

The ſixt ground of fear.

6. Thou haſt found the exerciſe of thy Graces failing ſometimes, when thou haſt had moſt need of them; and the diſpoſition of thy heart in the Cauſe of God ſometimes failing, coming ſhort of that activity that ſhould be in it, or the exerciſe of thy graces in putting forth ſtained; Therefore thy condition is not right ſaiſt thou.

Doth that follow thinkeſt thou? Did not the Diſciples Faith fail them when they had need of it, when they were toſt upon the Sea? Where's your Faith? ſaith Chriſt; they had need of it then, I think you will eaſily grant me that: And they had not the exerciſe of it, and therefore *Mark* reads it, *How is it that ye have no Faith?* Yea and *Peter* when he denyed Chriſt, had he been ſtedfaſt in the faith, he had

*Mar.*4.40. *Luk.*8.25.

had not denyed, but reſiſted Sathan. And *Peters* Chriſtian boldneſs and courage failed him too, at that time. Did not *Moſes* faith fail him, when God ſaith, *ye beleeved me not?* Num. 20. And for Love failing, *If ye loved me* (ſaith Chriſt) *ye would rejoyce*, Ioh. 14. So *Jobs* Chriſtian wiſdome faild him in his affliction, in Challenging God as he did to diſpute with him, and in juſtifying himſelf too far: Therefore God reproveth him in the cloſe of the Book. And ſo in the text, *Why are ye troubled?* Their apprehenſions failed them concerning Chriſt. But now, This doth not therefore follow that they were ſtark dead, and breath gone, and they out of the ſtate of grace becauſe of this.

Why Chriſtians graces fail them ſometimes when they have need of them.

But then, what ſhould be the Cauſe that Chriſtians faith and other graces ſhould be at ſo low an ebbe, when they ſtand in need of them?

I Anſwer. 1. Becauſe Chriſt alone will be ſeen in the buſineſs to be all in all: That we may ſee that he doth the whole work in us, and for us. As at his death, all muſt forſake him and fly, and *Peter* deny him, that he may alone do all, without being beholden to man for any thing. So in caſting out that Divel out of the mans Son, ſpoken of *Mar. 9.* The Diſciples unbelief diſabled them from caſting him out, that the power of Chriſt alone might be ſeen in doing it. *Col. 3 11. Iſa. 26 12.*

2. That the people of God might be humbled out of themſelves, and out of the pride of their own undertakings, when they ſee how weak they are, and their graces failing them; And that God is all in the thing; as *Job.* 42. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye ſeeth thee: Wherefore I abhor my ſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes.*

3. Becauſe many times they ſtand too much upon their own ſtrength; and live not clearly upon Jeſus Chriſt, as they ought to do; and ſo they miſcarry. And that their confidence might be regulated. Therefore *Peter* fell, that he might ſee the miſplacing of his truſt. So, 2 *Cor.* 1. *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, That we ſhould learn not to truſt in our ſelves, but in God which raiſeth the dead.* And in another place, *I can do all things through Chriſt that* Phil. 4.

strengtheneth me. That we might learn to live above our graces, to have grace and all from Christ.

4. That so thou mightest learn to deny thy self, in thy Sanctified self, as well as in carnal self; in thy very graces, and not rest upon them: That so thou mayst account all thy Righteousnesses as filthy Rags: And be for ever kept from boasting.

Isa.64. Rom.3.27.

The seventh ground of fear.

7. Thou complainest, thou canst not attain to something that thou seest in other men, that peradventure were in Christ after thee, and are inferiour in gifts: Not to that humility, *&c.* Therefore thou fearest thy state, that thou art not truly converted, and hast no grace.

I Answer. That doth not follow, that therefore thou hast no grace. Did not *Elihu* pass the three Ancients spoken of in *Job* in understanding and wisdome? And yet I conceive they had grace; For God cals for their sacrifices, which he would not have done, had they been wicked men: For the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, *Pro.* 15.8. And did not *Paul* pass all the other Apostles in labour, and sufferings, and Revelations too? and they were in Christ before him. And *Mary* went beyond Christs Disciples in affection to Christ; for she could willingly spend the box of oyntment on Christ; but his Disciples murmured at it: yea, not onely *Judas*, but the rest also, as appears *Mat.* 26. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *&c.* And did not *Mary* believe the Resurrection sooner then they? and yet they were longer time with Christ then she. Again consider God dispenceth his gifts differently according to his own pleasure, 1 *Cor.* 12. To one a word of knowledge, to another the word of wisdome, to another Propheſie, *&c.* Now because thou hast not attained to the gift or measure of gift or enjoyment that others have, wilt thou say thou hast no grace?

Job 42.7, 8: 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. 2 *Cor.* 12. 2 *Cor.* 11.

The eighth ground of fear

8. Thou complainest thou enjoyest God least many times when thou settest thy self the best about it, and goest about to fit thy soul to entertain Christ, or get down corruption; as in fasting, *&c.*

I Answ. It may be so: and yet thou mayst be one that hast grace

grace too: ſometimes God delays to come in to his people, and puts off for divers ends known to himſelf, Hab. 1. 2. *O Lord* (ſaith he) *how long ſhall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? yea, cry out of violence, and thou wilt not ſave?* and yet this man was Gods. So *Job* cries out in the ſame words, *Job* 19. 7. *Behold I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgement.* So *David* alſo, *Pſal.* 69. 3. *I am weary of my crying, my heart is dryed: my eys fail while I wait for my God.* And *Job* 23. 8, 9. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he works, but I cannot behold him: he hides himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him.* Here ye ſee, he ſets himſelf about it, but could not find the Lord: He lookt behind him, before him, on both hands, but to no purpoſe. And ſo the Church, *Cant.* 3. 1 2. *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth, I ſought him, but I found him not,* &c. She's induſtrious, but finds him alone.

What ſhould be the reaſon (may ſome ſay) that the Lord ſhould keep aloof off, when a man ſets himſelf ſo ſeriouſly about it, I mean to find him?

Cauſes why God keeps off.

1. Becauſe God would have the creature know that he is free in working: He is not tied to come to preparations or qualifications of the creature: but to his own preparations. *The preparations of the heart, and the anſwer of the tongue is from the Lord,* ſaith *Salomon.* Prov. 16. 1.

2. He would let his people know that he will be waited on, to come in when he pleaſes: yet the creature muſt do his duty. Seek the Lord, and his ſtrength: ſeek his face evermore. *Paul* prayed thrice before he had an Anſwer of grace. 2 *Cor.* 12. *Pſal.* 105. 5.

3. Many times the people of God have too much ſelf-ends in their duties, and the Lord would have them to ſee it. *Zach.* 7. 5. Did you faſt unto me, even unto me? ſaith the Lord. And did you not eat for your ſelves, and drink for your ſelves? It may be ſelf-love may drive a man to it, to obtain ſome bleſſing that he wants, rather then to enjoy God himſelf: And God would ſhew him this errour, and take him off from it.

4. That

4. That they may ſee their former Slothfulneſs, and Negligence. *Cant.* 5. When Chriſt had waited and called for admittance, and could not have it, he withdraws, to let his Spouſe ſee how he did diſtaſte her Sloth and Neglect and Excuſes.

5. That he might be the ſweeter to thee when he comes in again, and that thou mighteſt ſtick the cloſer to him, when thou haſt found him again.

6. To try thy Faith, and Patience, and Conſtancy whether thou wilt perſevere in following him, and wait upon him, as the woman of *Canaan* did; though thou have repulſe after repulſe, and little hopes in reaſon: yet to try if thy faith can conquer reaſon; And that thy faith may be ſeen with the greater luſtre when it is tried. For God by delaying and putting off, diſcovers to you the temper of your Spirits, whether you will willingly wait the Lords leaſure; or whether you will fret and fume, and wait no longer. As we do ſometimes by beggers, put them off or give them no anſwer; and if they be indeed in great wants, and of meek ſpirits, they will lament and weep, and be thankful for a little when it comes: But your ſtout ſturdy beggers, when they are not anſwered, they will fall a reviling and curſing, and give high words; ſo that by delaying you may ſee their ſpirits. So doth the Lord by this means ſhew you your ſpirits, and temper of heart.

The ninth Ground of fear.

9. He complaines he hath hurt the cauſe of God, when God hath brought him upon the ſtage to have done ſomething for God: perhaps to have ſuffered. And ſo his Soul is wounded, and he fears his condition.

And did not *Peter* do ſo? Did not he fly off when all had forſaken Chriſt, and break his word and reſolution, and ſhamefully deny his Maſter contrary to his former profeſſion? So *Moſes*, and *Aaron*, Num. 20. 12. *Becauſe ye believed me not, to ſanctify me in the eies of the children of Iſrael* (ſaith God) *Therefore ye ſhall not bring this congregation into the Land*, &c. Theſe men hurt the cauſe of God, and failed when they ſhould have ſtuck to it; and yet all real converts.

10. You

10. You cry out, you have oftentimes relapſt into the ſame ſins which formerly you have purſued with particular ſorrow, and grief: and prayed, and reſolved againſt them; and that makes you queſtion the truth of your ſtate. The 10. ground of fear.

This is indeed a ſad condition; But this doth not prove thy ſtate naught; for it hath been the caſe of the ſervants of God ſometimes. Therefore ye have this confeſſion, Our backſlidings are many; ſo that you ſee it was oftentimes again and again. The Prophet *Jonah* relapſed into paſſion, and diſcontent with God. He was diſcontent with the work God ſet him about, therefore he flieth to *Tarſhiſh*; *Jonah.* 1. 2. 3. And ſorrowes for it, and confeſſeth Chap. 2. 8. They that truſt upon lying vanities, forſake their own mercies; yet ſee Chap. 3. 1. When God had ſhewed mercy to *Niniveh*, how diſcontent he was with the Lord again. It diſpleaſed *Jonah* exceedingly, and he was very angry. And when the Lord (that might have confounded him) reaſons ſweetly, and mildly with him, to take him off from his paſſion; as appears, Chap. 3. 3. 4. and provides for him what he wants; yet upon a ſmall occaſion again, the taking away of a gourd, or ſhrub (and the Lord had a gracious end in it too, the convincing of him of his folly in being ſo waſpiſh) he breaks out again into the ſame paſſion or worſe, as if he had never ſeen the evill of it, or been humbled for it. Chap. 4. 8. 9. I am greatly angry, Or I do well to be angry even unto death, ſaith he. See how often he relapſed into this ſin; and *Peter* denieth Chriſt not only once, but again, and again. † And this comes to paſs ſometimes.

† And perhaps the prodigal ſets out unto us a Chriſtian relapſt, for he was a ſon before, and with his Father, and then went away from him, and ſpent all: And yet he was not quite undone, but returned again.

1. To let you ſee your own weaknes, that you can do nothing of your ſelves: cannot withſtand, nor reſiſt, nor overcome; that ye may be taken off of all falſe confidences, and reſt upon God, and God alone for help; That ye may reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the faith.

2. For the advancement of the praiſe and honour of the wiſdome, skill, and goodneſs of God, the Phyſitian of our ſouls, that can and doth cure when the diſeaſe is more dangerous, when thou art relapſt, and it grows worſe and worſe,

as in curing the woman that had the bloody Iſſue, that was worſe and worſe notwithſtanding all the means ſhe uſed, till ſhe came to Chriſt.

3. This advanceth his Mercy the more, that he doth not quite forſake thee, when thou haſt done what thou canſt to drive him away; as Micha. 7. 18. 19 *Who is a God like unto thee that pardons Iniquity, that paſſeth by the trangreſſion of the remnant of his heritage? He retains not his anger for ever, becauſe he delights in mercy. Oh but I have relapſ't, and driven him away* (ſaith the poor ſoul) But mark now ver. 19. *He will turn again, he will have compaſſion on us: he will ſubdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all our ſins into the depths of the Sea.* And the prodigal ſaw the compaſſion of his Father the greater in receiving him again after he had run away from him.

The eleventh ground of fear.

11. He hath grieved the Spirit, and neglected Chriſt for trifles, ſmall matters of the world; &c.

And did not *Jonah* do ſo? For a little credit to run away from God, and for a little eaſe to be ſo angry as he was, were not theſe trifles? And this was *Martha's* fault, to neglect hearing Chriſt for theſe outward things, being cumbred about buſineſſes. And this was *Aarons* and *Miriams* ſin, in murmuring againſt *Moſes*, becauſe of their eſtimation; a poor buſines. And *Aarons* ſin in making the golden Calf, a trifling Idol: to grieve the Spirit of God both in himſelf, and others.

Cauſes of this.

And let me tell you, there may be other cauſes of this diſtemper, and not becauſe thou art not truly converted.

1. Becauſe ſecurity may ſeiz upon the ſpirit ſometimes; deſire to be at reſt and eaſe. Cant. 5. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?* Now ſhe neglects Chriſt, and yet his Spouſe.

2. Becauſe the things of the world are ſuch bewitching, alluring things, and the Divel is ready to preſent them to thee in the glorioueſt ſhew as may be, as he did to Chriſt: Therefore Chriſt for the preſent is neglected.

3. For want of a clear and more full manifeſtation of the Excellency

Excellency of Jeſus Chriſt. As *Paul* before he had a clear manifeſtation of Chriſt, he trifled about legall priviledges and duties; but afterwards he counts them loſs for Chriſt. *Phil.* 3.7.8.

12. Thou complaineſt, Thou haſt found thy heart apt to take Liberty, and to be looſe when occaſion and opportunity hath ſuited to thee, when thou mightſt be ſecret from the eye of man, cloſe in private. Therefore thou concludeſt thy ſtate is not right, and thou art troubled. The laſt ground of fear.

This ſome of the ſervants of God have found; As David, when he ſaw *Bathſheba* waſhing her ſelf, how looſe was his heart on a ſudden in inordinate luſt after her? And ſaith he *Pſ.*19. *Cleanſe me from my ſecret Sins*; ſuch as never come into the ſight of men. And becauſe of this (I conceive) there are ſuch Caveats to ſhun the very baits and occaſions to ſin. As a man inclined to whoredom and luſt; ſee the advertiſment, *Prov.*5.7. *&c. Hear me now, O ye children: And depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her* (that is the whoriſh woman) *and come not nigh the door of her houſe; Leſt thou give thine honour unto others, &c.* and ſo he goes on to verſ.14. To ſhew the danger of occaſions to that ſin. So *Prov.*23. Concerning Drunkenneſs. verſ. 31. *Look not thou upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the Cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright.* Why? Why thou mayſt be catcht with it, thy heart being looſe. And ſaith he, *At the laſt it bites like a Serpent, and ſtings like an Adder.* Our Saviour knew how apt the hearts of his Diſciples were to be looſe; Therefore ſaith he, Take heed, leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfetting and drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life: And take heed and beware of covetouſneſs: And take heed of the leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie. And ſaith *Solomon*, keep thy heart with all diligence. Now what need all theſe Caveats, if the hearts of Chriſtians were not apt to run aſide, and be looſe? And this comes to paſſe oftentimes.

1. Not for want of Grace (becauſe the man hath no grace) but for want of watchfulneſs, and diligent obſervance to

give the heart to God, and to walk in his wayes. *Prov.* 23. 26.—— 33. *My Son* (ſaith he) *give me thine heart, and let thine eyes obſerve my wayes.* And then he ſhewes (if it be otherwiſe,) the Danger of whoredom and drunkenneſs: And ſaith verſ. 33. *Thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange Women, and thine heart ſhall utter perverſe things.*

2. Becauſe the Devil is a cunning diligent Adverſary, to lay his baits to deceive at every turn. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant; for your Adverſary the Devil as a roaring Lyon goes about continually ſeeking whom he may devour.* So that now I would have you to remember that Gods thoughts are not your thoughts; nor Gods wayes your wayes: If God had as low thoughts of poor Chriſtians as they have of themſelves many times, there were good Reaſon they ſhould be troubled: But ſaith he, As high as the Heavens are above the earth, ſo high are my thoughts above your thoughts, and my wayes above your wayes; and howſoever you may cry out as Zion *Iſa.* 49. 14. *The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*, yet conſider what the Lord ſaith, I know the thoughts I have towards you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil. The Lord make his poor troubled people know them, and then their hearts will ſettle.

Iſa. 55.

FINIS.

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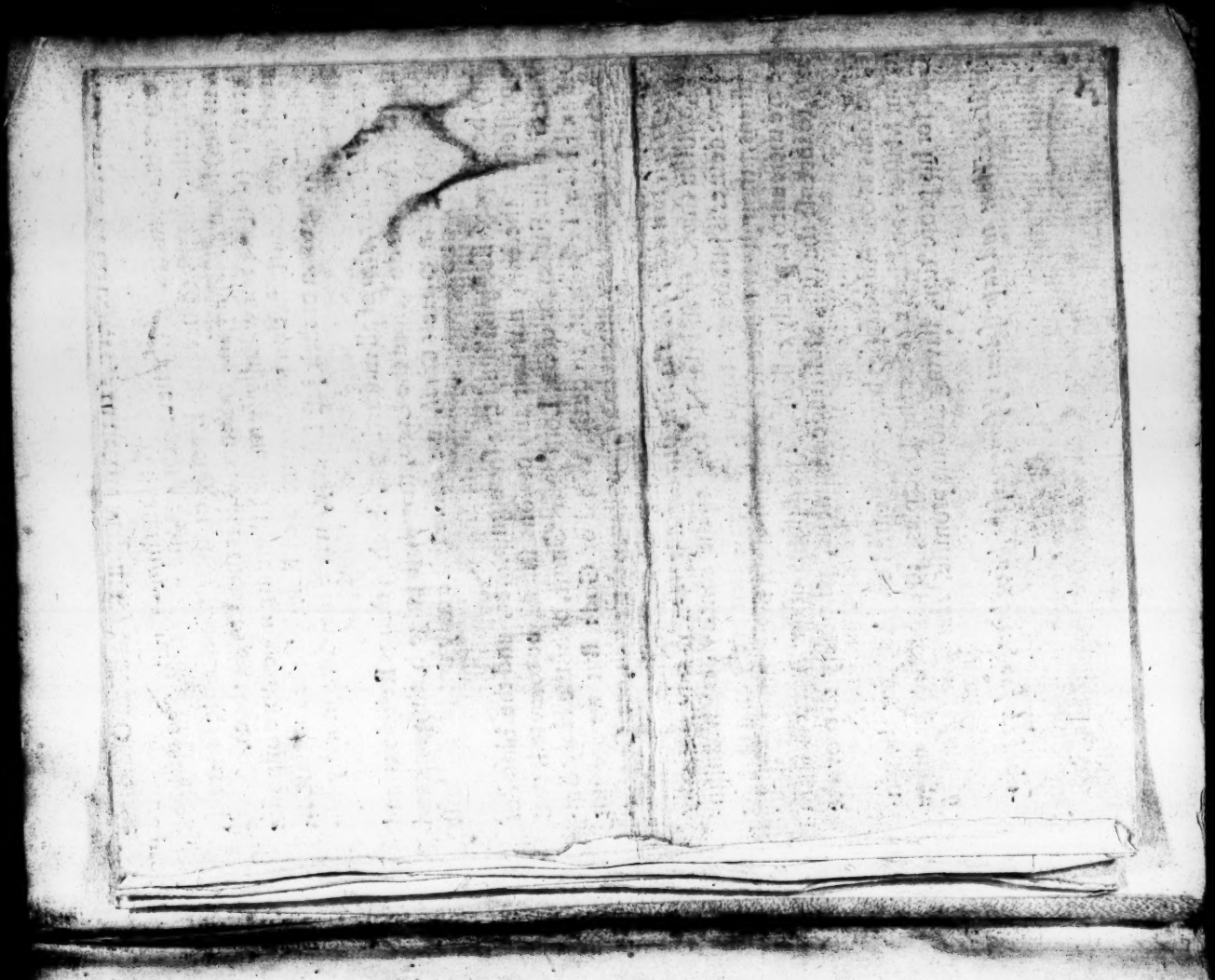
In regard I was abſent When my former Book was Printed, there are many faults eſcaped in Printing, and no notes of correction Printed; And for ſome weighty reaſons moving me thereto I deſire here to note the chief of them that alter my ſence of things, which in the Senſe they go in, I ſhall not own.

The Title of the Book is

A Way to Sion ſought out and found for beleevers to walk in. &c.

PAg. 62. lin. 22. for *reſolved*, r. *relieved*, p. 97. l. 16. f. *all* r. *of*, p. 115. l. 34. f. *all Chriſt*, r. *after this*, p. 120. l. 32. f. *glorified*, r. *gloried*, p. 125. l. 1. after only, add *Then this miniſtring muſt be meant of Deacons only*. p. 128. l. 17. f. *Original* r. *Organic*.... p. ib. l. 35. blot out *but only*, and inſtead thereof r. *And*. p. 176. l. 28. f. *dead*, r. *weak*. There are many other faults, but being more eaſily eſpied by the ingenuous Reader, I here let them paſs without giving notice of them.